University of Alberta

Trendy or Timeless?
The Classical Heritage of Contemporary Japanese Television Love Stories

by

A. Gretchen Phillips

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

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May 21, 1999 A. Gretchen Phillips

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わかれ が 出会い の はじめ

Each parting is the beginning of a new relationship

University of Alberta

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled *Trendy or Timeless? The Classical Heritage of Contemporary Japanese Television Love Stories* submitted by A. Gretchen Phillips in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in East Asian Interdisciplinary Studies.

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Dedication

This dedication spans continents and centuries. First and foremost, to my entire family for their support and the endless hours of Japanese television that they endured (and, of course, enjoyed☺). Secondly, to the memory of the author of *The Tale of Genji*, Lady Murasaki Shikibu, whose tales of Heian Japan continue to spark my imagination. Finally, to Kimura Takuya, the 'shining prince' of Japanese trendy dramas.

Abstract

This thesis is an interdisciplinary exploration of the resonance between Japanese 'trendy dramas' of the 1990's and an inherited aesthetic of romantic love from the Heian period as exemplified in *The Tale of Genji*. The study focuses on four dramas, *Tokyo Love Story*, *The Most Important Person*, *Long Vacation*, and *Love Generation*. Literary analysis of the Heian texts is combined with an anthropological approach to the study of popular culture. Informant case studies have been included to illustrate contemporary attitudes toward romantic love. Viewer questionnaires have been used to reveal underlying perceptions of romantic love that shape audience reception of trendy dramas. It is my contention that the presence of a unifying lyrical mood in the dramas can be linked to the classical concept of *mono no aware* and that, as in *The Tale of Genji*, the emphasis is on the processes of the love story rather than on closure.

Acknowledgments

I am indebted to Dr. Sonja Arntzen and Dr. Pamela Asquith for their constant encouragement and insight. In addition, I would like to thank Dr. Jenn-Shann Lin and Dr. David Young for their interest in this project as well as their advice. Thanks also go out to the entire East Asian Studies department, especially Sharon MacKenzie and Heather McDonald.

Researching Japanese popular culture from this side of the Pacific would have been even more difficult had not been for regular updates from Carol Brandly, Satsuki Amemori, and Kumiko Toyôka, as well as all the contributions from the questionnaire participants. I am grateful to Dr. Michiko Kawashima, Dr. Hiroko Terakura, Kazuko Higashida, Kaori Kabata, and Yoko Taki, who all gave generously of their time whenever I needed translation assistance. Valerie Henitiuk's editorial advice proved invaluable, and Shawn Marcil's computer magic saved me hours of retyping.

Table of Contents

Page

Dedication

Abstract

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

List of Trendy Dramas in Japanese

List of Tables

Chapter 1 Introduction: A *Tokyo Love Story*: From Fan to Researcher 1

- I. *The Tale of Genji* 2
- II. *The Tale of Genji* and Popular Culture 3
- III. *The Tale of Genji* and Trendy Dramas 5
- IV. Trendy Dramas as an Area of Research 7
- V. Overview 9

Chapter 2 Not just Idol Curiosity: The Study of Japanese Popular Culture 11

- I. The Study of Popular Culture 11
- II. Popular Culture in Japan 14
- III. A Definition of Popular Culture 29
- IV. Approaches to the 'Trendy or Timeless' Question 31

Chapter 3 'True Love Never Runs Smooth':
Marriage and Romantic Love in Contemporary (Heisei) Japan 34

- I. Arranged Marriages: *Omiai* 34
- II. Romantic Love: *Renai* 35
- III. The Mixing of Three Traditions 36
- IV. Romantic Love in Trendy Dramas and the Individualized Self 43
- V. Conclusion 46

Chapter 4 Love at First Imagination: Romantic Love in Heian Japan 48

- I. Heian Heroes 49
- II. Feminine Mystique 53
- III. The Stuff Fairy Tales Were Made Of 56
- IV. *Mono no Aware*: The Essence of Love 57
- V. Expressions of *Aware* 59

VI. Closure: East and West 65
VII. Conclusion 70

Chapter 5 Trendy *Mono No Aware*: Traces of the Heian in Heisei Romances 71

I. Heisei Heroes and Heroines 71
II. The Stuff Trendy Dramas are Made of 72
III. Trendy *Mono no Aware* 73
IV. Expressions of Trendy *Aware* 78
V. Closure: Past and Present 85
VI. Conclusion 92

Chapter 6 Questionnaire Analysis 94

I. Romantic Elements 95
II. Closure 99
III. Conclusion 100

Chapter 7 Conclusion: Contemporary Culture and the *Aware* of it All 101

Bibliography 105

Appendix A: Trendy Drama Questionnaire Two [English Version] 116

Appendix B: Trendy Drama Questionnaire Two [Japanese Version] 119

Appendix C: Trendy Drama Questionnaire Two Results 123

List of Trendy Dramas in Japanese

一番大切なひと	*The Most Important Person*	TBS 1997
ロングバケーション	*Long Vacation*	Fuji 1996
ラブジェネレーション	*Love Generation*	Fuji 1997
ラブジェネレーション’９８ ハッピーエンドで始めよう	*Love Generation '98:* *Let's Start With a Happy Ending*	Fuji 1998
東京ラブストーリー	*Tokyo Love Story*	Fuji 1991

List of Tables

		Page
Table 1	Number of viewers who have watched each drama	95
Table 2	Terms describing the love story in trendy dramas	98
Table 3	Viewers' responses to questions about drama endings	99

Chapter 1: Introduction

A *Tokyo Love Story*

From Fan to Researcher

"Good night" says the man as he and the woman turn to go along separate paths in the darkened park. They seem reluctant to say good bye as they slowly back away from each other making comments about having sweet dreams and not being late for work. Finally they agree to both walk away on the count of three. "One, two, three!" With that the man promptly turns around and begins to stroll away. Then something causes him to stop and turn back in the direction of the woman. She is standing in the same spot smiling at him and she begins to repeat his name, each time with a bit more emotion, "Kanji, Kanji, Kanji…" Suddenly she breaks off, races towards him and throws her arms around him. "Oh, Kanji," she exclaims as the theme song "*Rabu sutôrî wa totsuzen ni* [A Love Story is Sudden/Unexpected]"[1] begins to play, "I love you!" This proclamation catches Kanji off guard and he admonishes her, "Rika…." Still hugging Kanji, Rika giggles and says "Oops! The secret is out!" Then she steps back, says good night and walks away leaving an awestruck Kanji behind.

In 1993 I used to rush home from work to make it home in time for the 5:00 reruns of this drama, *Tokyo Love Story*[2]. It was during this daily dose of trendy drama[3] reruns that I became intrigued by these Japanese soap operas. Once I was able to decipher the code of my Japanese TV guide, I made it a point to tune in to Fuji and TBS television channels to keep up to date with the latest developments in the relationship of the season. I began to buy entertainment magazines and tried to keep track of the gossip about the young good-looking actors. Trendy dramas became somewhat of a hobby for me.

Aside from the familiar streets of Tokyo, the popular idols, and the catchy theme songs, there was something else that intrigued me about trendy dramas that I could not quite put my finger on. Then my classical Japanese literature classes flashed through my mind and it seemed to me that these contemporary Japanese television love dramas resonated with an essence that is embodied in the Heian period (794 -1185) novel *The Tale of Genji*[4] by Murasaki Shikibu.

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[1] Ôda Kazumasa, "*Rabu sutôrî wa totsuzen ni* [A Love Story is Sudden/Unexpected]," CD Single, Funhouse, Inc., 1991.

[2] *Tokyo Love Story* [*Tôkyô rabu sutôrî*], writ. Sakamoto Yuji, prod., Ôta Akira, Fuji Television, 1991.

[3] In Japanese: *torendî dorama*.

Whenever I watched these shows, this thought was always present in the back of my mind. Thus, I began my transformation from trendy drama fan to researcher. I undertook this research in order to confirm or correct my subjective perception. I was brought to anthropology in order to find theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of popular culture. At the same time, I pursued classical literary studies so that I could deepen my appreciation of Heian literature and *The Tale of Genji* in particular. This thesis is the result of an interdisciplinary exploration of the relationship between the classical romance *The Tale of Genji* and the trendy dramas of Japan in the 1990's.

The Tale of Genji

One thousand years ago, aristocrats in the small, narrow world of the Heian court kept themselves amused by reading about the romantic escapades of the elegantly handsome prince, Hikaru Genji, otherwise known as 'the Shining Prince'. It is thought that the author of *The Tale of Genji*, Murasaki Shikibu, wrote the 54-chapter novel in installments that were circulated around the court and read aloud. Throughout the course of the novel, Prince Genji fathers a child with his stepmother, sleeps with his best friend's concubine, acquires three official wives and two mistresses and has numerous clandestine affairs. After Genji's death, the novel continues with the amorous adventures of Genji's son, Yugiri, and his grandsons, Kaoru and Niou.

While *The Tale of Genji* is famous not only for the fact that it is considered to be one of the first psychological novels written in the world, it is also among the earliest works ever written by a woman. Murasaki Shikibu's *The Tale of Genji*, along with a number of other works by Heian court ladies such as *The Kagerô Diary*, *Izumi Shikibu Diary*, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shônagon* and *Sarashina Diary*[5] were the first in a long tradition of classical Japanese prose written in the vernacular Japanese language as opposed to the academic language of Chinese. Much like the episodes of a trendy drama are viewed weekly, as soon as Murasaki Shikibu completed a chapter of *The Tale of Genji*, it was passed around the Heian court and read aloud by ladies-in-waiting to their wards. Evidence that each chapter was greatly anticipated exists in autobiographical works such as the *Sarashina Diary* in which the author writes that she prayed for a chance to read the rest of the chapters of the *Genji*.[6] It may not be the case in modern Japan that people pray for a chance to learn about Prince Genji's life; however, should they have an interest, there are many multimedia opportunities for them to do so.

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[4] Edward Seidensticker, trans., *The Tale of Genji* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976 [1989 reprint]) or Arthur Waley, trans., *The Tale of Genji: A Novel in Six Parts by Lady Murasaki* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1935).

[5] Sonja Arntzen, trans., *The Kagerô Diary* (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 1997), or the translation by Edward Seidensticker, *The Gossamer Years: The Diary of a Noblewoman of Heian Japan* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1964); Edwin A. Cranston, trans.

The Tale of Genji and Popular Culture

Since the eleventh century, the *Genji* has been the basis, in various forms, of entertainment such as the Nô plays popular in the Muromachi period (1338-1573).[7] If you turn on the TV in Japan today, or flip through one of the fashion magazines, you may see someone resembling Prince Genji promoting the Suntory canned green tea product, Nohohoncha.[8] Hirota Akiko[9] has examined in great detail the popular forms of *The Tale of Genji* in contemporary Japan in the article "The *Tale of Genji*: From Heian Classic to Heisei Comic".[10] In order to make this classic accessible for people in an era vastly different from the Heian period, the *Genji* has been reproduced in popular comic book form. According to Hirota, one of the most popular and beautifully illustrated versions is *The Tale of Genji: Fleeting Dreams* [*Genji Monogatari: Asaki yume mishi*] by Yamato Waki published between 1980 and

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The Izumi Shikibu Diary: A Romance of the Heian Court (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), or the translation by Earl Miner in his *Japanese Poetic Diaries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969); Richard Bowring, trans., *Murasaki Shikibu, Her Diary and Poetic Memoirs: a Translation and Study* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982); Ivan Morris, trans., *The Pillow Book of Sei Shônagon* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967); Ivan Morris, trans., *As I Crossed a Bridge of Dreams: Recollections of a Woman in Eleventh Century Japan* [*Sarashina Nikki*] (New York: The Dial Press, 1971).

[6] Morris, *A Bridge of Dreams* 54-55.

[7] See Janet Goff, *Noh Drama and The Tale of Genji* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

[8] Nohohoncha, advertisement, *MORE* June 1997: 110-111. Also a television commercial.

[9] With the exception of names of historical and fictional figures connected with classical literature, all Japanese names appear in the Japanese order: the family name first, followed by the personal name.

[10] Hirota Akiko, "*The Tale of Genji*: From Heian Classic to Heisei Comic," *Journal of Popular Culture* Vol. 31.2 (1997) 29-68.

1993.[11] There is also an English comic book published in 1989.[12] Japanese high school students often use these comic books to help them get a better understanding of Prince Genji's world when they are studying for the classical Japanese sections of their university entrance exams. Of Yamato Waki's comic books, Hirota says the following:

> [the comics are] a happy mixture of archaic and modern Japanese so the contemporary teenager will easily understand while becoming immersed in the atmosphere of the Heian language. In later volumes more and more poems are presented in the original with modern interpretations, making the reading of this comic version a learning process for young readers.[13]

While the comic book version is a favoured media to read the *Genji*, the 1987 animated cartoon version[14], complete with English subtitles is a very appealing way to get at the story.

Perhaps one of the most convincing popular remakes of this classic story is TBS's 1991 production, *The Tale of Genji.*[15] In this drama the author, Murasaki Shikibu herself, has a starring role as the narrator of the show to explain the intricacies of Heian life to the audience and to keep the story flowing smoothly. This is similar to the original version in which the narrator's thoughts are often woven into the text. The sets are a very surrealistic mixture of Nô and Kabuki stages. The surreal elements give the illusion of the scroll picture [*emaki*] illustrations of the novel that are still in existence. The casting of teen idol Higashiyama Noriyuki as the young Genji and the famous Kabuki actor Kataoka Takao as the mature Genji creates an interesting contrast. Throughout history Prince Genji has been played by the actor thought to be the most handsome at that particular time.[16] Hirota suggests that "this TV drama is like *The Tale of Genji*, Murasaki Shikibu's diary, and Ivan Morris's *The*

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[11] Hirota 39: Yamato Waki, *Genji Monogatari: asaki yume mishi* [The Tale of Genji: Fleeting Dreams], Kodansha Comic Books Mimi. 13 Volumes (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1980 –1993).

[12] Tsuboi Koh, *The Illustrated Tale of Genji*, English text by Alan Tansman, eds. Shimizu Yoshiko and Konaka Yotarô (Tokyo: Shinjinbutsu Oraisha, 1989).

[13] Hirota 47.

[14] *The Tale of Genji* (animated version), dir. Sugî Gisaburô, Asahi National Broadcasting Company, 1987.

[15] *Genji Monogatari* [The Tale of Genji], writ. Higashida Sugako, dir. Kamoshita Shinichi, TBS, 1991.

[16] Hirota 50.

World of the Shining Prince[17] rolled into one," and is an excellent medium for anyone, Japanese or otherwise, to gain a better understanding of the epic novel.[18]

It is ironic that in terms of form, *The Tale of Genji* has more in common with western soaps than Japanese trendy dramas.

> One of the distinctive syntagmatic features of the soap opera is its absence of closure; it is, in fact, one of the few narrative forms predicated upon the impossibility of closure. […] what is frequently overlooked in discussions of the soap opera is its paradigmatic complexity – a complexity that makes the soap opera unique among visual narratives and unmatched in literary narrative except for the most elaborate of epic novels.[19]

The epic novel *The Tale of Genji* has an ambiguous ending that could be another starting point, a huge cast of characters, and numerous story lines. In other words, it has all the makings of a soap opera. As Virginia Woolf points out in her 1925 review of Arthur Waley's translation of the novel, *The Tale of Genji* is not only about the prince.

> To light up the many facets of his mind, Lady Murasaki, being herself a woman, naturally chose the medium of other women's minds. Aoi, Asagao, Fujitsubo, Murasaki, Yugao, Suetsumuhana, the beautiful, the red-nosed, the cold, the passionate- one after another they turn their clear or freakish light upon the gay young man at the centre, who flies, pursues, who laughs, who sorrows…[20]

Thus, readers are made privy to the thoughts of an infinite number of characters through the omniscient eye of the narrator, which acts much like the lens of the TV camera in modern soap operas.

***The Tale of Genji* and Trendy Dramas**

Unlike *The Tale of Genji* and western soap operas, the love story in a trendy drama is acted out within a set time period of ten to twelve weeks. Given this time limit, the focus is only on the relationships of a few characters. Despite this difference, the Heian classic and its modern counterparts share some interesting qualities. Michael

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[17] Ivan Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince: Court Life in Ancient Japan* (Tokyo and New York: Kodansha International, 1964 [1994 reprint]).

[18] Hirota 51.

[19] Robert C. Allen, *Speaking of Soap Operas* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985) 69.

[20] Virginia Woolf, "*The Tale of Genji*: The First Volume of Mr. Arthur Waley's Translation of a Great Japanese Novel by the Lady Murasaki," *Vogue London* July 1925: 53 and 80.

Hoffman discusses the *Genji's* modern aspects in the article "Heian's Modern Merits."

> Muraski Shikibu was interested in all the "selves" in her world – a narrow world, true, but one which nonetheless furnished her with the raw material for a cast of about 430 characters, each unique in some subtle, unfathomable way – each, in short, a "self." The concept of self – individual, self-contained, distinct from family and society – seems so natural to us that we forget that it had to be discovered.[21]

This is reminiscent of Prince Genji' s observation that "amid all the fabrication [one] does find real emotions and plausible chains of events"[22] in romances. The emphasis on individuality in the *Tale of Genji* has also been cited as a characteristic of contemporary Japanese TV love stories.

> ... Japanese comics, TV dramas, and pop music do contain clear expressions of the kind of life people in the postwar society are leading and the kind of aspirations they hold. [...] the quest for ideals revolves around such social themes as the meaning of life, being at one with nature, the freedom to pursue one's romantic impulses, and the clash between the individual and the organization. [...] the Japanese portrayed in modern popular culture have distinctive personalities, assert themselves strongly, seek out meaningful self-actualization and liberated social relationships, and pursue highly sophisticated lifestyles.[23]

While all of these themes can be observed in the trendy dramas, the central theme is love. It may be that these dramas appeal to Japanese viewers because of qualities that they share with the Heian classic: that is, their mutual emphasis on longing and the bittersweet aspect of love, *mono no aware*[24], rather than fulfillment, as the important element of the story. Perhaps it is this notion of *aware*, "to love is to suffer gloriously"[25] that Murasaki Shikibu so skillfully cultivated in *The Tale of Genji*, that has been passed down through centuries to a new generation. Within a set time period, these contemporary Japanese television love stories resonate with the longing for love and the non-closural quality of *The Tale of Genji.*

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[21] Michael Hoffman, "Heian's Modern Merits," *Japan Quarterly* 45.1 (1998) 71.

[22] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 437.

[23] Honda Shiro, "East Asia's Middle Class Tunes in To Today's Japan," *Japan Echo 21.4* (1994) 78.

[24] *Mono no aware* is pronounced with equal emphasis on each syllable.

[25] John R. Wallace, "Tarrying with the Negative: Aesthetic Vision in Murasaki And Mishima," *Monumenta Nipponica* 52.2 (1997) 186.

Trendy Dramas as an Area of Research

Soap operas, melodramas, serial narratives, dramas, love stories, home dramas, trendy dramas all share the same theme: human relations.[26] Due to their associations with excessiveness and the melodramatic, 'soap operas' did not become a 'serious' area of study until the 1980's.[27] In the 1980's and 1990's numerous studies pertaining to the American soap opera genre were published by scholars such as media culture specialists Robert C. Allen and Ien Ang.[28] Tania Modleski's 1984 book *Loving With a Vengeance*: *Mass Produced Fantasies for Women*[29] is just one of many studies that takes a feminist approach to soap operas. The title of the book, *To Be Continued: Soap Operas around the World*[30] is evidence that although the forms may vary, these dramas are an international area of interest. In Japan, dramas have been part of the television scene since broadcasting began in the 1950's.[31] The family centered home drama genre and serialized morning dramas have been examined by Paul A.S. Harvey in the articles "Interpreting *Oshin*: War, History and Women in Modern Japan,"[32] and "Nonchan's Dream: NHK Morning Serialized Television Novels."[33] In the book

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[26] For a detailed discussion of the 'soap opera' genre around the world, see Robert C. Allen, "Introduction," and Roger Hagedorn, "Doubtless to Be Continued: A Brief History of Serial Narrative," in *To Be Continued: Soap Operas Around the World*, ed. R. C. Allen (London and New York: Routledge, 1995): 1-26, 27-48.

[27] Allen, "Introduction," (1995) 6.

[28] See Robert C. Allen, *Speaking of Soap Operas* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985) and Ien Ang, *Watching Dallas* (London and New York: Routledge, 1985), *Desperately Seeking the Audience* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991) or *Living Room Wars* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996).

[29] See Tania Modleski, *Loving With a Vengeance: Mass-Produced Fantasies for Women* (New York: Methuen, 1984; Hamden, Conn.: Archon, 1982).

[30] Robert C. Allen, ed. *To Be Continued: Soap Operas Around the World* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996).

[31] Hirahara Hideo, "The Shôwa 30's (1955-1964)," *A History of Japanese Television Drama: Modern Japan and the Japanese*, eds., Gotô, Hirahara, Ôyama, Sata (Tokyo:The Japan Association of Broadcasting Art, 1991) 19.

[32] Paul A.S. Harvey, "Interpreting *Oshin*: War, History and Women in Modern Japan," *Women, Media and Consumption in Japan*, eds. Lise Skov and Brian Moeran (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995) 75-110.

[33] Harvey, "Nonchan's Dream: NHK Morning Serialized Television Novels," *The Worlds of Japanese Popular Culture*, ed. D.P. Martinez (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) 133-151.

Conflict in Japan Agnes M. Niyekawa, who specializes in linguistics, does an analysis of conflict in a home drama.[34]

Like home dramas, trendy dramas are growing as an area of academic interest. While I have not come upon many published works dealing with the subject, I am aware of several American and European scholars who are interested in the topic. In Germany, the University of Trier's Hilaria Goessmann does research on trendy dramas. At the 1997 Japanese Popular Culture Conference held at the University of Victoria, Dr. Goessman presented a paper titled "Changing Attitudes toward Gender Roles in Popular Japanese TV Dramas of the 1990s,"[35]. Goessman also has presented papers on this topic in German. At the same conference, John Leo discussed "*Renzoku Ren'ai Dorama*," presenting an overview of "continuous romantic love dramas."[36] Heidi Knobloch, from the University of Hamburg, has done research on the representation of romantic love in the drama *Long Vacation*.[37] In "The Framing of Identity Through Japanese Media Representations of Marginality," James Valentine examines how marginal characters are represented on television and in trendy dramas such as the deaf character in the 1995 drama *Please Say You Love Me*.[38] Cultural anthropologist Millie Creighton has done research on modern TV dramas in Japan. Further investigation in Japan is required to determine whether or not Japanese sociologists have published research on this topic.

One of the published works that I have come across about trendy dramas is Stephen D. Miller's article "The Reunion of History and Popular Culture: Japan 'Comes Out' on TV," in the Fall 1997 issue of the *Journal of Popular Culture*. In the article Miller discusses the 1993 prime time drama *Reunion* which focuses on the relationship between two young gay men as they come to accept their sexuality. He then examines the reasons why an open and affirmative depiction of homosexuality can exist in a country where the public discussion of homosexuality has been silent.[39] Miller traces this acceptance back to the long history of male love depicted in works such as the Tokugawa period (1600-1868) author, Saikaku's *The Great Mirror of Male Love*[40]. Similarly, in the article "Transformational Magic: Some Japanese Superheroes and Monsters," Tom Gill examines cultural continuities with mythological heroes such as Momotaro, the Peach Boy, represented in commercial television dramas for children.[41] As is evident in the above discussion, trendy dramas are a genre that now comprises an area of academic research. Therefore, a project such as this one, looking for echoes of Heian Japan in a popular culture medium, is a valid contribution to a relatively new area of research.

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[34] Agnes M. Niyekawa, "Analysis of Conflict in a Television Home Drama," *Conflict in Japan*, ed. Krauss, Rohlen and Steinhoff (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984) 61-84.

[35] Japanese Popular Culture Conference presented by University of Victoria Centre for Asia Pacific Initiatives, April 9-12, 1998, Victoria, BC, Canada.

[36] John Leo, "*Renzoku Ren'ai Dorama* [Continuing Romantic Love Dramas]," online, Internet, 8 Oct. 1998.

[37] Heidi Knobloch, "Liebesdramen: Geschlechterbeziehungen in populären japanischen Fernsehserien, 1986-1996 [Love Dramas: Gender Relationships in popular Japanese Television series]," paper presented at the First Workshop of the Panel "Japanese Popular Culture", University of Trier 24-25 August, 1997.

[38] James Valentine, "The Framing of Identity Through Japanese Media Representations of Marginality," *The Japan Foundation Newsletter* Vol. 25.1 (1997) 7-10.

Overview

In the following chapter I will provide a definition of popular cultures as a field of study, and an introduction to Japanese popular culture with a particular emphasis on the four trendy dramas *Tokyo Love Story*[42], *Long Vacation*[43], *Love Generation*[44], and *The Most Important Person*[45]. The methodology I employed throughout my research and the goal of the questionnaire that I created will be explained at the end of this chapter. Chapter three will focus upon the relationship between romantic love and marriage in contemporary Japan and its portrayal in trendy dramas. Chapter four will provide a description of romantic love in the Heian period as it is depicted in the romances of the time. The two genres will be linked in chapter five, in which I will discuss traces of the Heian in the Heisei (1989-present) using examples from *The Tale of Genji* and the four trendy dramas. In chapter six, I will compare my ideas with the opinions of Japanese viewers reflected in the results of the questionnaire.

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[39] Stephen D. Miller, "The Reunion of History and Popular Culture: Japan 'Comes Out' on TV," *Journal of Popular Culture* Vol. 31.2 (1997) 161-175.

[40] Paul Gordon, trans., *The Great Mirror of Male Love* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990).

[41] Tom Gill, "Transformational Magic: Some Japanese Superheroes and Monsters," *The Worlds of Japanese Popular Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) 33-55.

[42] *Tokyo Love Story* [*Tôkyô rabu sutôrî*], writ. Sakamoto Yuji, prod. Ôta Akira, Fuji Television, 1991.

[43] *Long Vacation* [*Rongu bakêshôn*], writ. Kitagawa Eriko, dir. Kameyama Chihiro, Fuji Television, 1996.

[44] *Love Generation* [*Rabu jenerêshon*], writ. Asano Taeko, prod. Koiwai Hiroetsu, Fuji Television, 1997.

[45] *Ichiban Taisetsuna Hito* [*The Most Important Person*], writ. Aoyagi Yumiko, dir. Yagi Yasuo, TBS, 1997. This drama is listed by the Japanese title because it is originally Japanese while the other 3 titles use English words.

Chapter seven concludes with my contention that traces of the Heian literary aesthetic *mono no aware,* a dominant element in *The Tale of Genji,* are evident in trendy dramas. Furthermore, I will argue that in both the *Genji* and the trendy dramas discussed here, there is an emphasis on the processes involved in a love relationship rather than on closure or the fulfillment of desires.

Chapter 2

Not Just Idol Curiosity

The Study of Japanese Popular Culture

The bride, dressed in traditional wedding kimono and wig, races through the crowded streets of Tokyo at a breakneck pace. Hiking up her silk kimono she bounds up the stairs of the apartment and rings the bell furiously. Inside the surprisingly spacious apartment furnished with a grand piano and leather sofa, a sleepy young man cautiously opens the door only to slam it shut after viewing the bizarre presence outside. With a display of great strength, the bride forces open the door demanding to know where her groom is and why he wasn't at the shrine ready to be married. So begins the Japanese trendy drama *Long Vacation.* The audience sees the two main characters again, looking much more beautiful, when the jilted bride comes to apologize to the groom's roommate for her rude behavior. Consequently, she moves her furniture into the room deserted by her ex-fiancé, much to the dismay of the young man. The audience follows the progress of the relationship of the piano teacher and aspiring model as it evolves from that of roommates to friends, to lovers, and ultimately to husband and wife. This twelve part serial drama, starring the super idol Kimura Takuya and the gorgeous model-*cum*-actor Yamaguchi Tomoko, was a popular hit during the spring of 1996. *Long Vacation* is just one of many dramas which fall under the category of trendy dramas because of the presence of big name stars wearing the latest fashions and living in housing which their characters realistically cannot afford. The dramas typically deal with love, work and the pursuit of dreams. Trendy dramas are one genre in the diverse world of Japanese popular culture. This chapter will introduce various aspects of the study of popular culture and its relevance to understanding Japanese culture.

The Study of Popular Culture

The study of popular culture began to be viewed as an academic field in the early 1970's. As interest in the field began to grow, so too did the number of suggestions regarding how to define popular culture. In fact, it has been said that "no other discipline has sought out the theories and methodologies used in other fields and brought so many of them to bear on a generalized study of the humanities and social sciences in an effort to explain the general status of human actions in society."[46] Two of the more popular and contradictory suggestions are the "mass culture theory"[47] and that of the culture of the people. In brief, for supporters of the mass culture theory, popular culture is a commercial culture imposed on the masses through the means of mass media by a few people. The masses are inundated by mass produced culture and the only choices they really have are to buy or not to buy. Supporters of the mass culture theory fear that consumer oriented culture will expand to the point that there will be no room for diversity or for original culture to flourish.

The flip side of this view is the idea that popular culture is the culture of common people created in response to an oppressive power.[48] 'The people' create their own culture using the tools originally intended for oppression, such as television. In other words, mass culture comes from above and popular culture is produced from below. While the purported direction of influence is opposite, the presence of the mass media as a conveyor of popular culture is common to both.

The Frankfurt School takes the pessimism of the mass culture theory further. The Frankfurt School for Social Research was started in Germany in 1923. For intellectuals such as Theodor Adorno, the culture industry impeded the development of humans as individuals.[49] According to Adorno "the customer is not king, as the culture industry would have us believe, not its subject but its object."[50] In other words, consumers become so saturated by popular culture that they can no longer decide for themselves what they want. Consequently, the culture industry creates false desires that the masses unconsciously satisfy by spending money on the products of this industry.

Not surprisingly, feminists claim that there is another hegemony evident in popular culture. Feminism focuses on the male dominance of culture and representation of women in the mass media.[51] An example of the latter is the numerous studies of women in advertising. The book *Women, Media, and Consumption in Japan* is an example of this trend.

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[46] Ray Browne and Pat Browne, "Introduction," *Digging into Popular Culture: Theories and Methodologies in Archeology, Anthropology, and Other Fields*, eds. Ray Browne and Pat Browne (Bowling Green Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1991) 1.

[47] Dominic Strinati, *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995) 1-50.

[48] John Fiske, *Reading the Popular* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989) 2.

[49] Strinati 54.

[50] Strinati 62.

> As would be expected of an analysis of women and media anywhere in the world, issues such as femininity, sexuality, love, age, family, food and fashion play a central role in the following chapters. All of the contributors to this book have, in one way or another, been poring over the shoulders of Japanese women - leafing through their magazines, reading their books, or watching their television programmes – to see how all these topics are dealt with in the intimate and personal, yet highly commercial, world constituted by women's media.[52]

In this book the question is whether or not women in Japan are being liberated or discriminated against by the media which love to focus on them. The conclusions that the contributors reached seem to reflect the idea that the representation of Japanese women in the media is contradictory. Women are used to convey innovations in Japanese culture such as attention to the environment but in actuality they play a very small role in the impact these innovations will have on the culture.[53]

Generally speaking, ideas regarding popular culture focus on the mass media as a dominant force in society. According to sociologist Dominic Strinati postmodernism "tries to come to terms with, and understand [this] media-saturated society."[54] Popular culture, as it is conveyed through the mass media, dominates society's sense of reality, and thus it begins to become reality. This results in the blurring of the distinction between art, or high culture, and popular culture. Strinati supports this concept with the example of pop artist Andy Warhol's multi-imaged print of *The Mona Lisa* titled 'Thirty are better than One' which can be interpreted as a comment on the fact that even fine art can be mass produced.[55] This mass production turns the art into an object of popular culture. Consequently, consumers buy these mass produced objects simply because they are products of popular culture "not for the deeper values they may symbolize."[56] Reality and a media-constructed reality, high culture and popular culture, and the economy and popular culture merge in a postmodern world.

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[51] Strinati 181.

[52] Lise Skov and Brian Moeran, "Introduction: Hiding in the Light," *Women, Media and Consumption in Japan*, eds. Lise Skov and Brian Moeran (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995) 5.

[53] Skov and Moeran, "Introduction," 5.

[54] Strinati 224.

[55] Strinati 226.

[56] Strinati 225.

Popular Culture in Japan

Kato Hidetoshi, a prominent figure in the area of popular culture studies in Japan, holds the view that popular culture is everyday culture, but places emphasis on the fact that it is 'Japanese' popular culture: "Popular culture in *this country* [Japan] is the culture that is shared by every single individual."[57] Kato takes this concept of exclusiveness further when he attempts to explain why the term popular culture cannot be directly translated into Japanese.[58] The argument he presents is that the term that Japanese scholars use is *taishû bunka*. The problem that he points out is that when translated into English, *taishû bunka* means mass culture, a phrase which in light of the mass culture theory has very definite implications and thus cannot be used as a general term by English scholars. According to Kato, the other difficulty with these two terms is that while the English word, popular, implies a distinction between elite and common culture, the word *taishû* was originally a Buddhist term so it does not reflect a concept of class distinction. In other words, the use of the term *taishû bunka* supports Kato's idea of popular culture as being a culture shared by everyone in Japan.

This *taishû* versus popular debate is discussed further in three later publications that deal solely with Japanese popular culture. In *Contemporary Japan and Popular Culture* (1996) John Whittier Treat points out that the term *taishû* in Japan carries with it the same connotations as 'popular' does in English because the meanings of both terms "reflect political assumptions and agendas in whose interests that term has been deployed."[59] In other words, many English-speaking scholars prefer terms such as 'mass', 'public', or, as in the case of Sonia Ryang[60], simply 'culture' to the term 'popular'. Whittier compares the 'mass' [culture imposed upon the people] versus 'popular' [culture of the people] debate with the '*taishû*' [culture imposed upon the people] versus '*minshû*' [culture of the people] debate in Japan but indicates that they are not identical.[61] Finally, Treat explains that some Japanese social scientists such as Aoki Tamotsu use the English words '*popyurâ*' [popular] and '*masu*' [mass] to indicate a difference from the Japanese vocabulary "that would otherwise confine them."[62] These debates indicate that the study of popular culture in Japan is just as controversial as it is in the West.

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[57] Kato Hidetoshi, "Japanese Popular Culture Reconsidered" *Handbook of Japanese Popular Culture*, eds. Richard Gid Powers and Kato Hidetoshi (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989) 315. Emphasis in original.

[58] Kato Hidetoshi, "Some Thoughts on Japanese Popular Culture," *Handbook of Japanese Popular Culture*, eds. Powers and Kato (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989) xvii-xviii.

[59] John Whittier Treat, "Introduction: Japanese Studies into Cultural Studies," *Contemporary Japan and Popular Culture*, ed. Treat (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996) 5.

The fall 1997 issue of the *Journal of Popular Culture* is dedicated entirely to Japanese popular culture. In the introduction, Jan Bardsley acknowledges the debates that Kato and Treat have discussed and adds to them. Bardsley highlights negative views that scholars such as Tessa Morris-Suzuki hold regarding the state of Japanese popular culture today. She states that Morris-Suzuki "sees little room for personal freedom in Japanese society, and regards media and consumption as directed by the needs of corporate Japan."[63] This echoes the ideas of the Frankfurt School that were discussed earlier in the chapter. On a more positive note, Bardsley turns to Marilyn Ivy's description of the views of anthropologists Ueno Chizuko and Asada Asano that it is " 'the emergence of a new, feeling based individual sensibility' which has emphasized desire and consumption as *tools* of popular control."[64] In other words, their view is that the people have the purchasing power and can control the extent to which popular culture exists in their lives. Finally, Bardsley indicates that the goal of the fall 1997 issue of the journal is to reaffirm this positive view of the term *taishû bunka* as "a truly popular culture of personal choice, of small group consciousness and influence, and thereby, 'purchasing power' in Japan."[65]

Anthropologist D.P. Martinez suggests that since 'high' forms of entertainment such as opera and ballet are now being consumed by masses of people around the world as borders blur and distinctions between 'high' and 'low' disappear,

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[60] Sonia Ryang, anthropologist, e-mail to author, 24 Nov. 1997.

[61] Treat 5.

[62] Treat 5.

[63] Jan Bardsley, "Purchasing Power in Japanese Popular Culture," *Journal of Popular Culture* Vol. 31.2 (1997) 11.

[64] Bardsley 11. Emphasis in original.

[65] Bardsley 12.

perhaps the term *taishû bunka* [mass culture] is an appropriate term for the pop culture of the nineties.[66] The great number of women in Japan who study the tea ceremony, classical dancing, or classical instruments is evidence that the term is suitable in the case of Japan.[67] She also reminds us of the postmodern idea that it is not just the products of popular culture that are important but how the people interact with them.[68] Martinez adds another dimension to the popular versus mass culture debate: "...popular culture (and not just in Japan) is not only *mass culture*, the culture of the imagined community: it is culture consumed, and consumed in various ways, by different people."[69] Therefore, the relationship between the products of popular culture and the people who partake in their entertainment is of great importance to people studying popular culture.

Nihonjinron

In the same chapter, Kato lists four points that he feels are vital to the study of popular culture in Japan.

1. Japan is an egalitarian country
2. The Japanese population is extremely homogeneous with gaps in social classes much narrower than in other societies.
3. The elite in Japan are less class conscious than the elite in other countries and are more accepting of popular culture.
4. Japanese popular culture is unique and that this uniqueness should be considered when studying it.[70]

These four points reflect the rhetoric of a huge body of work called *nihonjinron* that can be literally translated as 'discussions of the Japanese'. In the book *The Myth of Japanese Uniqueness* Peter Dale defines *nihonjinron* as any type of writing that reflects the idea that Japan and the Japanese are unique.[71] Likewise, Yoshino Kosaku states that *nihonjinron* is a form of cultural nationalism that aims to define the uniqueness of Japanese culture, society and national character.[72] Both authors agree that *nihonjinron* is separate from the academic research that has been done on Japan because the former is made up by works written from the point of view of dilettantes and is not necessarily based upon academic research. By stating that Japan is a homogeneous society that should be approached as a unique culture, Kato is echoing the ideas proposed by *nihonjinron.*

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[66] D.P. Martinez, "Introduction: Gender, Shifting Boundaries and Global Cultures," *The Worlds of Japanese Popular Culture*, ed. Martinez (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) 5.

[67] Martinez 5.

[68] Martinez, 4-5.

[69] Martinez 6.

[70] Kato, "Japanese Popular Culture Reconsidered," 316.

[71] Peter Dale, *The Myth of Japanese Uniqueness* (Kent: Croom Helm, 1986) 14.

When studying Japanese popular culture, scholars often refer to this concept of 'Japaneseness' or the national identity that some aspects of popular culture are seen to reinforce. However, for Brian Moeran, this emphasis on 'Japaneseness' may be becoming a thing of the past in advertising campaigns. In "In Pursuit of Perfection: The Discourse of Cars and Transposition of Signs in Two Advertising Campaigns" Moeran suggests that rather than using Japanese elements to sell products, advertisers have started to move away from this emphasis on 'Japaneseness' by including non Japanese elements in the ads too. Here he gives the example of a *sumo* wrestler skateboarding through Golden Gate Park.[73] In other words, Moeran is proposing that this random use of international images is evidence that the idea of 'Japaneseness' may no longer be relevant to the study of popular culture.

Scholars from a variety of disciplines have contributed to the growing body of research on Japanese popular culture. Naturally, the more obvious forms of popular culture such as sports, literature, popular music, and television have been examined. Even studies of 'New Religion', the performing arts and tourism have also been included under the umbrella of Japanese popular culture. For the purposes of this study, I will consider the performing arts, literature, popular music and television dramas as popular culture in Japan.

The Performing Arts

A look at the performing arts *manzai* (comedy dialogue between a straight man and a clown) and *rakugo* (the art of storytelling) reveals that they have a definite link with Japanese popular culture. The impact they have had on this culture is examined in

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[72] Yoshino Kosaku, *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary Japan* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992) 2.

[73] Brian Moeran, "In Pursuit of Perfection: The Discourse of Cars and Transposition of Signs in Two Advertising Campaigns," *Contemporary Japan and Popular Culture,* ed. Treat (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996) 62.

Muneo Jay Yoshikawa's contribution to Power and Kato's handbook.[74] These two traditional art forms have permeated the world of popular culture through television, videos and radio. He notes that since the Meiji period (1868-1912) *rakugo* style has remained virtually unchanged. Despite this stability, performances broadcast on radio and television in the 1980's resulted in the creation of *rakugo* idols and study groups similar to fan clubs. In the 1990's another resurgence of interest in *rakugo* has been observed. The University of Michigan's Patricia Welch connects *rakugo*'s recent popularity with nostalgia.

> ...a recent wave of nostalgia among Japanese, attributable to increasingly rapid technological development and social change, has sparked a retreat into a familiar past and thus has contributed to the growth in popularity of *rakugo*.[75]

Hence, audiences look to *rakugo* for a sense of tradition that will reassure them in the present. Welch goes on to say that if *rakugo* artists continue to place their traditional stories within a contemporary context, people will be able to relate to and enjoy this classical style of entertainment.[76]

In contrast to *rakugo*'s relatively unchanged style, *manzai* is a comedy style that is continually changed to suit both the performers and the audience. As Mark Schilling indicates in his article "The Kings of Comedy are Downtown", the wildly popular duo Downtown, have adapted the *manzai* style of comedy to create their own comedic style.[77] Among these two comedians' several television shows, *Gaki Tsukai Ya Arahende!* (*This is No Job for Kids!*) is one of the most popular comedy shows on Japanese television.[78]

As the preceding examples indicate, *rakugo* and *manzai* can both be said to have a continuing impact on popular culture. Their ongoing presence in the mass media gives them accreditation as an area of study in the field of popular culture.

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[74] Muneo Jay Yoshikawa, "The Performing Arts," *Handbook of Japanese Popular Culture*, eds. Powers and Kato (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989) 75-96.

[75] Patricia Welch, "A Laughing Critique of the Ages: *Rakugo* Humor and Society," *Japan Quarterly* Vol. 44.4 (1997) 47.

[76] Welch 54.

[77] Mark Schilling, "The Kings of Comedy are Downtown," *Mangajin* No. 63 (1997) 16-17.

[78] Schilling, "The Kings of Comedy are Downtown" 16.

Literature

Literature is no stranger to popular culture. For writers of serious or 'pure' literature (*junbungaku*) in Japan such as Ôe Kenzaburô, the Generation X writers such as Murakami Haruki and Yoshimoto Banana have created quite a controversy in Japan with regards to the plight of literature in Japan. Both writers have enjoyed a huge commercial success much to the consternation of the likes of literature professor Masao Miyoshi who feels that their success diverts attention away from serious novelists such as Nobel Prize Winner Ôe Kenzaburô.[79] In the book *Postmodernism and Japan* Ôe 's contribution, "Japan's Dual Identity", focuses on the opinion that the trend towards the fiction of pop writers like Yoshimoto, marks the decline of Japanese culture because popular culture is taking over.[80]

However, as John Whittier Treat points out in "Yoshimoto Banana's *Kitchen*, or the Cultural Logic of Japanese Consumerism", despite the superficial, naïve quality of her books, Yoshimoto has been awarded literary awards.

> But her *Kaien* award for best new writer of the year was an exceptional event in Japanese literary history not on account of her youth, but because, in the published summary of their deliberations, none of the judges praised the work. At a loss of what to say about this scant story so redolent of Japan's distinctly low-cultural female adolescent (*shôjo*) culture, the judges rather seemed resigned to award the prize on the basis of their nebulous impression that they were witness to something 'new' in Japanese literature…[81]

This reflects the postmodern idea of art and popular culture becoming one and the same because although the award marks some kind of acceptance into the realm of 'serious' literature, the market success of Yoshimoto's work fits within the realm of popular culture.

Treat also attributes the popularity of Yoshimoto's novels to the public's nostalgic yearning for the happy family in another article about her work in the anthology *Contemporary Japan and Popular Culture*.[82] However, he concludes that Yoshimoto's cultural representations of home may not really exist. Therefore, it is a constructed nostalgia that readers yearn for, not necessarily the real past.[83] Aoki Tamotsu also discusses the nostalgic element of Murakami Haruki's novels stating that he portrays a "pleasant, even sentimental" world while still insinuating that sentimentality may symbolize the decline of Japanese culture.[84]

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[79] Ann Sherif, [Review of] "*The Dilemma of the Modern in Japanese Fiction* by Dennis Washburn," *Monumenta Nipponica* vol. 50.3 (1995) 389.

[80] Ôe Kenzaburô, "Japan's Dual Identity," *Post Modernism and Japan*, eds. Masao Miyoshi and H.D. Harootunian (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1989) 189-21[illegible]

[81] John Whittier Treat, "Yoshimoto Banana's *Kitchen*, or the Cultural Logic of Japanese Consumerism," *Women, Media and Consumption in Japan*, eds. Skov and Moeran (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995) 276.

For supporters of the 'pure' literature school of thought in Japan, the poet Tawara Machi's commercial success is also a bone of contention. In 1987, the 26-year-old revolutionized *tanka* for her generation. Her *tanka* collection, *Salad Anniversary*[85] created a sensation in Japan's literary world by selling an unprecedented 2.5 million copies in its first six months. Tawara's blending of the traditional 31-syllable poetic form, *tanka*, with the materialistic aspects of Japan in the 1980's revived an interest among young people in the classical form. From *Salad Anniversary* TV dramas, talk shows, musical revues and a full-length movie were all spin-offs from the best seller creating what is officially called "Salad Phenomenon".[86] In May 1997 Tawara published her third book of *tanka*, *Chocolate Revolution*[87], which deals with similar themes of love and life in the ordinary world.

Perhaps the reason for this commercial success was that the collection presented an age-old form in a new light as translator Juliet Winters Carpenter explains,

> Part of Tawara's achievement lies in her ability to use fresh, contemporary language-skillfully incorporating bits of natural conversation, borrowed words from English like "photographer," and modern icons like McDonald's–without sacrificing the traditional *tanka* virtues of concision, evocativeness, and musicality.[88]

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[82] Treat, "Yoshimoto Banana Writes Home: The *Shôjo* in Japanese Popular Culture," *Contemporary Japan and Popular Culture*, ed. Treat (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996) 298-299.

[83] Treat, "Yoshimoto Banana Writes Home" 305.

[84] Aoki Tamotsu, "Murakami Haruki and Contemporary Japan," *Contemporary Japan and Popular Culture*, ed. Treat (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996) 274.

[85] Tawara Machi *Salad Anniversary*, trans. Juliet Winters Carpenter (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1989).

[86] Tawara, *Salad Anniversary* 197.

[87] Tawara Machi, *Chokorêto kakumei* [Chocolate Revolution] (Tokyo: Kawade Shôbô, 1997).

[88] Tawara, *Salad Anniversary* 199.

Naturally this new approach to *tanka* met with criticism by those who felt that the mixing of classical and modern elements was not very effective. "One is tempted to compare it to a McDonald's hamburger-readily available, absolutely bland and easily forgettable,"[89] comments John Vachon of *The Daily Yomiuri*. He went on to say that although Tawara's combination of the old and new into her poetry is innovative, he did not seem to think that was relevant: "I suspect that it isn't the form that matters here and that the majority of Japanese who bought her book know little more about *tanka* than your ordinary Westerner knows about the Shakespearean sonnet."[90]

Despite criticism such as this, *Salad Anniversary* sold more books than an average poetry collection had. Similarly, in its first three months, *Chocolate Revolution* had reportedly sold more copies than its 'Salad' predecessor did in the same time period.[91] The postwar *tanka* poet, Tsuchiya Bunmei, whose *tanka* were also known to express events of daily life, countered similar criticism that *tanka* was a stale art form that could not be used to express life in the modern world with the following argument.

> I admit that the *tanka* is simple, but far from expecting that a form of literature which is so extremely close to the lives of people will disappear, I believe that it will continue to exist within the social structure, no matter what kind of structure that may be. Moreover, I believe that it is this poetry with simple roots, this *tanka* which will fill in the gaps and the estrangement between commercial literature and life.[92]

Tawara Machi's commercial success as a *tanka* poet in the late twentieth century supports Bunmei's claim. The critical acclaim of Yoshimoto, Murakami, and Tawara's literature indicates that the line dividing popular and pure literature is blurring.

Comic Books

A discussion of Japanese popular literature would not be complete without delving into the world of comic books. In "Japanese Comics", John A. Lent states that "the hugeness of the Japanese comic industry has no parallel in the world."[93] In fact, the 1.16 billion copies of comics produced annually constitute 27 percent of the total books and magazines printed in Japan.[94] The first comic (as we think of them today) was produced in 1920. Today comic genres vary greatly. Some of the more popular kinds are boys' comics (*shônen manga*) and girls' comics (*shôjo manga*). The most popular of the boys' comics is *Shônen Jump*, an action packed thick weekly comic with a basketball theme. *Shôjo manga*, popular among young girls, emphasize relationships and dreams rather than action. In Japan adults read comic books, too. For this audience there are samurai comics and *yakuza* comics. Comics for businessmen deal with topics such as gambling (*pachinko* and *mah jong*), the business world and erotica. *Doraemon*, a robot cat is a typical example of a comic book hero for children.

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[89] John Vachon, "Unsubstantial Appetizers." *The Daily Yomiuri* 23 July 1989.

[90] Vachon 1989.

[91] Derick Atienza, "A *Tanka* Poet's Bittersweet Revolt." *The Japan Times Weekly International Edition*. 28 July–3 August, 1997.

[92] Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature of the Modern Era, Poetry, Drama, Criticism* (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, 1984) 75.

Lent speculates that popularity of comics can be linked to the need for people living in a fast paced, high stress society to escape into a fantasy world that will not drain their pocketbook. He also cites television as an influence because the pictorial medium is said to 'read' like a television program.[95] In fact, the television drama *Tokyo Love Story* is based on the comic book of the same name. It is interesting to note that despite the fact that comic books are a highly visible form of entertainment and that it is the ambition of many young people to become comic book artists, there has been very little research done on this phenomenon outside Japan.[96]

Popular Music in the 1990's

In *The Encyclopedia of Japanese Pop Culture*, Mark Schilling says the following about Japanese pop music in the 1990's.

> In the early 1990's the Japanese pop music scene resembled that of the West in its fragmentation and cross- fertilization. Want rap in Osaka dialect? Folk rock with an Okinawan accent? Spacey ambient grooves in no known human language? We got it.[97]

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[93] John A. Lent, "Japanese Comics," *Handbook of Japanese Popular Culture*, eds., Powers and Kato (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989) 230.

[94] Lent 222.

[95] Lent 231.

[96] Lent 235.

[97] Mark Schilling, *The Encyclopedia of Japanese Pop Culture* (New York: Weatherhill, Inc., 1997) 98.

Indeed, Japanese popular music, or J-Pop as it is otherwise known, is a diverse mixture of talent versus image and electronic music versus live music. It has pervaded all areas of Japanese popular culture in the form of CD singles, albums, commercial ditties, *karaoke* performances on television variety shows, and drama theme songs. Just as pop music around the world does, J-Pop reflects Japan's regional differences and national similarities and presents them in one very well marketed package.

In 1994, the rap group East End x Yuri, based in Tokyo, produced a single titled "*Da Yo Ne*"[98] [It is, isn't it?]. It is a catchy, repetitious tune that was the inspiration of several other singles released in 1995 by Sony Music Entertainment that used the same song but sang the lyrics in the dialect of a certain area of Japan. In the Kansai (Osaka) region West End x Yuki sang "*So Ya Na*", in the Chubu (Nagoya) area it was Chubu end x Satomi and "*Da Ga Ne*", and in Hokkaido North End x Ayumi sang "*Da Be Sa*". Another regional band that has struck it big in the '90's is The Boom from Okinawa. Their style has been described as a mixture of reggae, bhangra, Okinawan folk, and Southeast Asian styles.[99] Their hits include "*Shima Uta*" [Island Song][100] and "*Kaze ni Naritai*" [I Want to Become the Wind][101].

The dance music group 'trf' [Tetsuya Komuro Rave Factory] is the creation of the multi-talented record producer Komuro Tetsuya. Consisting of one female vocalist, one DJ, and three dancers, the group performs to Komuro's pre-recorded music. They debuted in 1995 with great commercial success. Songs such as "Crazy, Gonna Crazy"[102] are described by writer Mark Schilling in the following way: "trf's speciality was Eurobeat rave music that, with its busy-but-insistent rhythms and simple-but-catchy hooks was easy to sing, easy to dance to, and, once heard, nearly impossible to launch from the brain."[103] Among his other huge successes is the teen idol Okinawan Amuro Namie whose sales in her first year totaled nearly eighty million dollars.[104] It is interesting to note that Komuro wrote and produced two songs for comedian Hamada Masatoshi of the duo Downtown. Hamada performed the songs live on the weekly TV show *Hey! Hey! Music Champ*. The song “Wow War Tonight”[105] has all of the above elements accompanied by the very out of tune singing voice of the comedian. Most likely it was the songs’ associations with Komuro and Downtown rather than their quality, that resulted in large volume of sales. These characteristics can be associated with a great deal of mainstream J-Pop.

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[98] East End x Yuri, "*Da Yo Ne*," CD Single, Sony Music Entertainment, 1994.

[99] Steve McClure, "Japanese Pop Music: A Beginner's Guide," *Mangajin* No. 36 (1994) 52.

[100] The Boom, "*Shima Uta* [Island Song]," CD Single, Sony Music Entertainment, 1990.

[101] The Boom, "*Kaze ni Naritai* [I Want to Become the Wind]," CD Single, Sony Music Entertainment, 1995.

[102] trf, "Crazy, Gonna Crazy," CD Single, Avex Trax, 1995.

[103] Schilling, *Encyclopedia* 99-100.

According to Charles Whipple in the magazine *Look Japan*, “the three key words in today’s [J-] pop music are ‘persevere’, ‘ok’, and ‘happy’”[106] and that young people in Japan today prefer songs about reality to those of a dream world. A look at the lyrics of main stream popular music indicate that this “don’t worry be happy” attitude does prevail. However, many groups also emphasize longings for love and the uncertainty of tomorrow in their songs. One such group, the trio Dreams Come True [DCT] is one of the most successful pop acts in Japan at the moment. Their lead singer, Yoshida Miwa has one of the strongest singing voices in the J-pop world.[107] The following song “Love, Love, Love” is about the bittersweet aspects of a relationship.

Ne Semete yumei de aitai to onegau	When I ask/long just to meet you in a dream
Yoru ni kagitte ichidomo ru ru ru...	Only in the night time, not a single time
Detekite wa kure nai ne	you won’t come to me
Ne doushite sugoku ai shite iru hito ni	Why do you suppose, to the one you really love,
Ai shite iru to iu dake de ru ru ru ...	just saying ‘I love you’
Namida ga dechaun darou	brings tears to ones eyes?[108]

The song is the theme song for the 1995 drama *Please Say You Love Me* [*Ai shiteiru to ittekure*]. Yoshida also sings in English with an almost flawless accent. DCT or *Dori Kamu* as they are affectionately known as by their fans, is a pop group with true talent that enjoys great popularity. Not only do they lend their talent to drama theme songs, but their songs, such as the 1993 hit "go for it!"[109], are used in TV commercials for products such as Shiseido lipstick. The use of pop songs in commercials is a universal phenomenon in the world of Japanese popular music.

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[104] Schilling, *Encyclopedia* 100.

[105] Hamada Masatoshi, “Wow War Tonight,” CD Single, Avex Trax, 1995.

[106] Charles Whipple, “Persevere, Be Happy,” *Look Japan* Vol. 44.510 (September 1998) 35.

[107] McClure 50.

[108] Dreams Come True, “Love, Love, Love,” CD Single, Sony Music Entertainment, 1995.

The world of pop music in Japan is dominated by "Johnny's idols". Talent agent Johnny Kitagawa of Johnny's Jimusho [Johnny and Associates] manages almost all the major all-male singing groups in Japan, composed of 'handsome' young teenagers.[110] The group that has gained the most popularity is the five-member group, SMAP[111] [Sports Music Assemble People]. Originally, all of the members of SMAP were dancers for Hikaru Genji, seven singing teenage boys who roller-skated their way to stardom in the late 1980's. As a separate entity, SMAP made their debut in 1991, but musically have not had as many hits as Hikaru Genji. Taking this in stride, Johnny's Jimusho started giving each member individual exposure in dramas and commercials. As their popularity grew, Johnny ended up with six[112] stars and one hit pop group. Their songs are light hearted, catchy tunes that echo the theme 'don't worry be happy'. As the members of SMAP get older[113], Johnny has started grooming a new generation of good-looking boy groups such as Tokio and V6 who continue to entertain in true J-Pop fashion; dancing, singing, acting, and selling their way into the hearts of Japanese people.

The Japanese Entertainment World [*Geinôkai*]

Since 1995 SMAP has dominated the drama, variety show and music scene. All of these areas are aspects of the entertainment/idol world [*geinôkai*]. Idols such as the members of SMAP: Nakai Masahiro, Kimura Takuya, Kusanagi Tsuyoshi, Katori Shingo and Inagaki Goro, are examples of a practice common in the Japanese entertainment world, that of creating multi-talented artists.[114] While all five young men star in dramas and television commercials, perhaps the most popular SMAP man is Kimura Takuya, or as he is nicknamed, Kimutaku.

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[109] Dreams Come True, "go for it!" CD Single, Sony Music Entertainment, 1993.

[110] Philip Brasor and Tsubuko Masako, "Idol Chatter," *Japan Quarterly* Vol. 44.2 (1997) 55.

[111] See Mark Schilling's discussion on SMAP in *The Encyclopedia of Japanese Pop Culture* pp. 230-237.

[112] In 1995 Mori Katsuyuki left the group to become a professional race car driver leaving 5 members.

[113] The 5 remaining members are in their mid-to-late twenties now.

[114] Schilling, *Encyclopedia* 234.

> In February 1996, a steamy TV ad that showed the long-haired, androgynously handsome Kimura Takuya getting his lips and face smeared with a new brand of Kanebo lipstick sent the product's retail sales soaring to 3.12 million units in the first two months— a company record and well worth the singer's hefty fee [...] The sponsor's only concern was that the campaign's posters, which showed a full face shot of Kimura, were disappearing from train station walls faster than they could replace them. Not only sexy but, as he proved on countless TV and radio appearances, disarmingly frank and charmingly quick-witted, Kimura had become the favourite boy toy of the 1990's.[115]

In his discussion on "Japanese Daytime Television", Andrew A. Painter claims that it is this breaking down of barriers between the actors and the audience that makes Japanese television popular.[116] Although Painter is referring to the relationship between talents [*tarento*] or TV personalities who are neither actors nor singers, and audiences, I feel that his observations could also be applied to idols like Kimutaku. These idols are often guests or hosts on variety and talk shows. Like TV talents, in the talk show environment, actors and singers are also thought to reveal themselves to the audience rather than putting up a front for the camera. This method makes the situation seem more real and intimate for the viewers. Painter gives a clear description of the world of idols in Japan.

> Watching and working on the Japanese television while listening to how my friends and colleagues would talk about various *tarento* [idols] led me to see the Japanese *geinôkai* as a special mass-mediated universe in which both public and private issues could be openly talked about; a sort of vicarious realm that supplies the *neta* [ideal situation] for topics otherwise too delicate to discuss [...] Because viewers in Japan do not see the *tarento* [idols] as fundamentally different from themselves, they are able to use the publicly available representations of *tarento* [idols'] lives in order to reflect upon their own.[117]

Painter's description of the Japanese entertainment world illustrates the kind of intimacy that is set up between idol and audience. Through a range of radio and television shows, commercials, magazine advertisements, and train station posters, members of the *geinôkai* find their way into Japan's living rooms, kitchens, and even bathrooms and become a part of the family.

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[115] Schilling, *Encyclopedia* 236.

[116] Andrew A. Painter, "Japanese Daytime Television, Popular Culture and Ideology," *Contemporary Japan and Popular Culture*, ed. Treat (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996) 213.

[117] Painter 213.

Television Dramas

Japanese television dramas can be traced back to the advent of television in Japan in 1953.[118] From that time home dramas [*hômu dorama*] focusing on the family, and historical dramas [*jidai*]were popular. Among these home dramas, *Oshin*, which aired on NHK between April 1983 and March 1984 was one of the most popular programs. This drama aired in fifteen -minute episodes weekday mornings and depicted the life of a Japanese woman who became a successful business- woman despite all odds.[119] Yet another genre of dramas in Japan are trendy dramas, privileged with prime time broadcasting slots. These trendy dramas are the equivalent of North America's prime time soap operas such as *Melrose Place* and *Beverly Hills 90210*. Both genres focus on the love lives of young, beautiful, urban, career–oriented people whose accommodations and lifestyles are realistically beyond their means. Schilling states that the trendy drama boom started in 1988 with Fuji Television's romantic comedy *I Want to Hug You!* [*Dakishimetai!*].[120] After the decline of the bubble economy, in the early nineties the focus of trendy dramas shifted away from material excess and a purely romantic comedy theme, to a mixture of comic scenes juxtaposed with moving moments of tenderness. This new generation of trendy dramas can be further divided into two categories, 'happy end'[*happi endo*] dramas in which the main couple stays together in the last episode and 'unhappy end' [*sure chigai*] dramas in which, ultimately the main couple does not stay together.

Bruce Stronach states that television in Japan is "the most popular source of information and entertainment among all the mass media."[121] He also states that Japanese television does not mirror a Japan that is unique among the countries of the world: "When Japan is examined through its image on television, it is enigmatic and eccentric but not unique."[122] Stronach goes on to say that one of the reasons for this is the strong influence of American television on its Japanese counterpart. This American influence is evident in Japanese trendy dramas. Kathleen Morikawa offers insight into the world of trendy dramas in her article "The Road to Ratings Success", "...many Japanese TV dramas [...] do not hesitate to "take a hint" from western films, as the TV magazines like to describe such borrowing, but quickly returns to the familiar subplots, cultural symbols, and stereotypes to flesh out the remaining 10 episodes."[123]

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[118] For a detailed discussion on the history of Japanese television drama, see Goto Kazuhiko, Hirahara Hideo, Ôyama Katsumi, Sata Masanori, *A History of Japanese Television Drama: Modern Japan and the Japanese* (Tokyo: The Japan Association of Broadcasting Art, 1991).

[119] See Schilling, *Encyclopedia* 168-171 or Goto et al, *A History of Japanese Television Drama*, 192.

[120] Schilling, *Encyclopedia* 273.

[121] Bruce Stronach, "Japanese Television," *Handbook of Japanese Popular Culture*," eds. Powers and Kato (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989) 130.

The example Morikawa gives is Fuji Television's trendy drama *Virgin Road,* which aired at the beginning of 1997. In this drama a young single and pregnant Japanese woman ropes a stranger into masquerading as her fiancé and eventually falls in love with him. As Morikawa points out, this story resembles the 1996 American movie *A Walk in the Clouds* starring Keanu Reeves. However, this is where Morikawa says that the similarity ends. The familiar Japanese elements that crop up in this drama are sentimental family relationships; secrets concerning the young woman's own birth, another woman, and the basic differences between Tokyo and Osaka residents (which the heroine and the hero are, respectively).

Stronach's suggestion is that this standard formula is not just employed in Japan to get good ratings, as it is in other countries, but that this standardization is the result of fundamental cultural factors. According to Stronach, Japanese art emphasizes form over content and this has been carried over to drama plots. He argues that once a drama with a certain plot gains popularity, that plot is reused again and again.[124] Stronach states that as a result of this emphasis, in television programs such as dramas the content becomes stereotyped, predictable, and boring. While I agree that visually these dramas are of very high quality, I do not share Stronach's disdain for the content of Japanese dramas. I would argue that while trendy dramas do recycle the boy-meets-girl plot lines and have soap opera melodrama incorporated into them, they also captivate audiences with unexpected turns in the story, interesting opening sequences, tender moments, innovative dialogue, popular idols, catchy music and an everyday quality that resonates with audiences. Another reason that these formulae do not become worn out quickly is because each drama only lasts ten to twelve weeks.[125] Therefore, trendy dramas are made to reflect current trends, news items and seasonal events. This also contributes to the everyday feelings that are often conveyed in the dramas. It is precisely for these reasons that I feel that trendy dramas are a valid area of research.

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[122] Stronach, 153.

[123] Kathleen Morikawa, "The Road to Ratings Success," *Mangajin* No. 67 (1997) 36.

[124] Stronach 154.

A Definition of Popular Culture

Contemporary cultural anthropologists usually define culture as a set of values and rules which allow individuals to understand the world and to engage in appropriate behavior. What is appropriate, of course, varies according to context.[126] Furthermore, we can distinguish between two major domains: everyday life and fantasy or diversion from everyday life. Here, it is suggested that the dramas examined in this thesis fall into the realm of fantasy, or escape from everyday culture. Fantasy has many aspects in common with everyday culture, and is indeed embedded in it, but, at least in the popular culture examined here, *The Tale of Genji* of Heian Japan and the trendy dramas of modern Japan do not entirely reflect reality.

For some scholars, however, the term 'popular' in popular culture is redundant. For instance, Ray B. Browne, the editor of the *Journal of Popular Culture*, maintains that popular culture is everyday culture.

> Popular culture is the everyday culture of a group, large or small, of people. It is far more than entertainment, the electronic media, folk life, fast foods, fashions, Wall Street, the church, the educational system or the government. It is the way of life in which and by which most people in any society live.[127]

Another suggestion, along the same lines, was proposed by Geoffrey Nowell-Smith in 1987 in the journal *New Formations*.

> To me, the most striking absence in the plethora of writing on popular cultural themes is any sense of artistic production – the idea that films are made by film-makers, that music is composed and performed by musicians, and with this the idea that there is a relation between the skills and talents of these musicians and film-

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[125] Schilling, *Encyclopedia* 272.

[126] e.g., Dorothy Holland and Naomi Quinn, eds., *Cultural Models in Language and Thought* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

[127] Ray B. Browne, "Internationalizing Popular Culture," *Journal of Popular Culture* Vol. 30.1(1996) 22.

> makers and the sort of pleasure that audiences get from music and cinema. When that comes in, or rather when it comes back, then the study of popular culture will have become the study of…culture.[128]

For Nowell-Smith it seems that popular culture is not being studied for its artistic value and if it were, it could no longer be seen as different than high culture. If that were the case, then there would be no need to make a distinction between the two so popular culture and high culture could both be referred to as just plain culture.

Nevertheless, just as the name, *Journal of Popular Culture*, illustrates, this term does exist and occurs repeatedly in the great body of research about it. In the book *Hiding in the Light*, in which Dick Hebdige refers to popular culture as "a set of generally available artifacts" such as movies, TV programs, books or CD's because these artifacts can all be related to entertainment.[129] Strinati expands on this definition in *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture* adding that these artifacts will differ depending on the time period and society that they represent.[130] This differs from Browne's definition of popular culture, which excludes any indication as to how people feel about a culture: whether they like it or dislike it.

According to sociologist Gary Alan Fine "the mere existence of the cultural element is insufficient for it to be considered popular culture, the extent of audience and audience reaction must be considered."[131] I feel that in order not to become bogged down by the theories that abound in the field of popular culture, it is necessary to begin with a working definition of culture as outlined above, and to view the dramas as being within a fantasy realm.

Trendy dramas, in my estimation, represent largely fantasy because of the idealized lives that the attractive characters lead. That is to say, although many of the characters are struggling with choices about careers, love and uncertain futures that ordinary, young Japanese people can identify with, they generally manage to maintain a stylish Tokyo lifestyle that the average Japanese young person can only dream of.

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[128] Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, "Popular Culture," *New Formations* No. 2 (1987) 90.

[129] Dick Hebdige, *Hiding in the Light: On Images and Things* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988) 47.

[130] Strinati xvii.

[131] Gary Alan Fine, "Popular…Culture: Sociological Issues and Explorations," *Journal of Popular Culture* Vol. 11.2 (1977) 381.

The same can be said of *The Tale of Genji* in its day, because it depicted the lives of the Heian aristocracy in a manner that suggested that they were entirely free of daily responsibilities and could wile away the hours thinking about love. Moreover, the main character, Hikaru Genji, who is portrayed as an unnaturally handsome, very accomplished, and widely admired young prince has, throughout the centuries, become a legendary hero. Throughout the novel the narrator constantly reminds readers that the 'shining prince' may not even be meant for this world.[132] Likewise, the ability of the protagonists in trendy dramas to pursue dream jobs and romantic interests of their own choice, despite what society dictates, is also very idealized. In trendy dramas these idealistic or fantasy situations coexist with societal expectations, thus creating the points of conflict upon which the story is developed. Therefore, trendy dramas are also illustrative of deeply held cultural values, and their ability to attract viewers is based on a shared set of values. Although this thesis examines *mono no aware* specifically, the broader cultural implications of trendy dramas will be considered in the conclusion.

Approaches to the 'Trendy or Timeless' Question

Recently, several anthropologists have studied popular culture as a source of insight into Japanese culture (for example, the collections edited by Skov and Moeran, 1995; Treat, 1996; Martinez, 1998). In the foregoing discussion, I have placed trendy dramas within the genre of popular culture entertainment. However, in contrast to the general consensus discussed at the beginning of the chapter in which popular culture is viewed as a dominant force determining values in society through mass media, I will argue that the popularity of these trendy dramas *reflects* the force of a pervasive (traditional) aesthetic about romantic love that remains in contemporary Japanese society.

The anthropological methods that I used to conduct my research were participant observation, informants, and questionnaires. First, while living in Japan[133], I was able to get a firsthand look at Japanese popular culture. I had access to and therefore was able to amass a large amount of background information that made it easier for me to conduct my research in Canada. Most importantly, I was able to observe people's reactions to the trendy dramas being shown at that time.

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[132] See Seidensticker, *The Genji* 3-4 and 13.

[133] I lived in Japan for two years from 1993-1995.

When I began my formal research in 1997, in order to gain a better understanding of who watches trendy dramas, I sent out a pilot questionnaire[134] via e-mail to four acquaintances in Japan in the fall of 1997. Although I am not aware how many copies they made and distributed, I did receive a total of 45 completed questionnaires. The respondents ranged in age from 11-55, 28 were female and 17 male. Of the 45 respondents, only 8 (4 female/4 male) claimed that they did not watch trendy dramas. An article in a Japanese magazine indicates that the audience that advertisers target for these dramas is 20-34 year-old women.[135] As I have already mentioned, my study of trendy dramas will focus upon four dramas: *Tokyo Love Story*, *The Most Important Person*, *Long Vacation*, and *Love Generation*. The first two dramas belong to the 'unhappy' end category, and the latter two to the 'happy end' category. My reasons for focusing on these particular dramas are threefold: 1) *Tokyo Love Story* and *Long Vacation* were in Fuji Television's top ten drama list[136], while at the same time, *Love* Generation was achieving high ratings. This trend was also reflected in my pilot questionnaire; 2) Like *Tokyo Love Story*, *The Most Important Person* ends with one of the main characters marrying someone else; and 3) all four of the dramas star prominent members of the Japanese entertainment world who were all ranked among the top ten male and female actors by the people responding to my pilot questionnaire.

As I stated in my introduction, my thesis is that the aesthetic ideal *mono no aware* is a quality embodied in both Heian romances and trendy dramas and that it is a focus on the process of a love story that is more important than the fulfillment of love. Once I had established this thesis, I created a second questionnaire to test it. In order to make sure that what I was asking in English had the same connotations in Japanese I had several native Japanese speakers assist me with the translation.[137] The target participants were Japanese males and females between the ages of twenty and thirty who had seen at least one of the four dramas in question. The goals of the second questionnaire were the following:

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[134] Other than the information in this chapter, the pilot questionnaire and a formal summary of the results are not included in this thesis.

[135] "Digest," *Shûkanshinchô* 24 Dec. 1998: 69.

[136] *TV Academy 2*, narr. Kondô Sato, dir. Ônishiki Gentaka, Tokyo, Fuji Television 1997.

[137] See Appendices A and B for the English and Japanese versions respectively.

1. To find out what elements of a love story are romantic for a Japanese audience
2. To find out whether or not any viewers see the aesthetic element *mono no aware* in trendy dramas
3. To find out what type of endings appeal to a Japanese audience.
4. To find out whether or not Japanese audiences associate 'happy end' (main characters marry) dramas or 'unhappy end' (main characters do not marry) dramas with any Heian literature.

Once completed I sent out copies of the questionnaire to Japan via regular mail and e-mail, which were distributed to an unknown number of people. Several Japanese exchange students in Alberta participated in the process, too. In total I received 31 completed questionnaires from people ranging in age from 19 to over 30.[138] Seventeen of the participants were female, 13 male and one unknown. I will discuss the results of this questionnaire in chapter 6. The following chapter will examine the relationship between romantic love and marriage in contemporary Japan as it is reflected in trendy dramas. This will provide the 'modern view' against which traditional Heian views will be compared.

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[138] Respondents were not specific about their age over thirty. They noted "30 +".

Chapter 3

'True Love Never Runs Smooth'

Marriage and Romantic Love in Contemporary (Heisei) Japan

'True Love Never Runs Smooth': this is the slogan for the 1997 trendy drama *Love Generation* which, for all its turmoil, ends happily for Teppei and Riko because they overcome all odds and marry. For people of Generation X (X-*sedai* born 1965-1976) this contradictory representation of romantic love in popular culture is standard in a society where arranged marriages [*omiai*] still occur. The following discussion will attempt to analyze the relationship between romantic love and marriage in Japan.

Arranged Marriages: *Omiai*

In the "Marriage with the Proper Stranger: Arranged Marriage in Metropolitan Japan", Kalman D. Applbaum states that as of the early 1990's, 25 to 30 percent of all marriages taking place in Japan were arranged marriages or *omiai*[139]. *Omiai* refers to marriages "arranged based upon the similarity of social standing of the families of the prospective couple."[140] Harumi Befu notes that emphasis on arranged marriages over 'love' marriages increased towards the end of the Tokugawa period (1600-1867) with the spread of the ideology of the warrior (samurai) class for whom marriages were political, not romantic alliances.[141] A basic belief about marriage was that "human feelings should not intrude upon the serious affairs of life."[142] Even today in Japan, obligations to one's family may cause a person to forsake love for practicality.

In the arranged marriages of Heisei Japan (1989-present), a mediator known as a *nakodo* introduces the two prospective people and their families. During the meeting, educational background, leisure interests and salaries are discussed. If this initial meeting is favourable to both parties, the couple may date for a time, after which they will marry if they are compatible.

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[139] Kalman D. Applbaum, "Marriage with a Proper Stranger: Arranged Marriage in Metropolitan Japan," *Ethnology* Vol. 34.1 (1995) 37.

[140] Applbaum 37.

[141] Harumi Befu, *Japan: An Anthropological Introduction* (San Francisco and London: Chandler Publishing Company, 1971) 50.

[142] Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* [1946] (New York and Scarborough, Ontario: New American Library, 1974) 184.

The increase in instances of arranged marriages in the Tokugawa period was due to strong Confucian influences that emphasized the importance of the family as a stable unit in society.[143] Therefore, a good marriage, approved by both families was believed to strengthen the foundation of Japanese society, the family. Stress on filial piety usually ensured that both the man and woman would conform to the wishes of their parents and marry for 'practical' reasons rather than 'frivolous' notions of love. In postwar Japan when the Allied Occupation removed Confucianism from public life, it was an ideology that was so deeply ingrained in Japanese culture that even today its influence is still evident. A reason for this is offered by Krauss, Rohlen and Steinhoff: "Perhaps because it was a time of national breakdown and rapid change, many Japanese retreated even more into the close-knit relationships of family and small group. In these relationships the old cultural values remained strong."[144] Arranged marriages are a remnant of Confucian tradition.

Romantic Love: *Renai*

In the article "A Cross-Cultural Perspective on Romantic Love", W.R. Jankowiak and E. F. Fischer define romantic love in the following way.

> By romantic love we mean any intense attraction that involves the idealization of the other, within an erotic context, with the expectation of enduring for some time in the future. Romantic love stands in sharp contrast to the companionship phase of love (sometimes referred to as attachment) which is characterized by the growth of a more peaceful, comfortable, and fulfilling relationship; it is a strong and enduring affection built upon long term association.[145]

In the book, *The Anatomy of Love* Helen Fisher equates romantic love with infatuation. However, she is quick to point out that "infatuation is more than exhilaration. It is part of love, a deep, 'mystical' devotion to another human being."[146] Thus, romantic love could also be termed "passionate" love. We will now examine the forms romantic love takes in Japan.

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[143] See Joy Hendry, *Understanding Japanese Society* (London: Croom Helm, 1987) 113-114.

[144] Ellis S. Krauss, Thomas P. Rohlen and Patricia G. Steinhoff, "Conflict and Resolution in Postwar Japan," *Conflict in Japan*, ed. Krauss, Rohlen and Steinhoff (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984) 379.

[145] W.R. Jankowiak and E.F. Fischer, "A Cross-Cultural Perspective on Romantic Love," *Ethnology* Vol. 31.2 (1992) 150.

[146] Helen Fisher, *The Anatomy of Love: A Natural History of Adultery, Monogamy and Divorce* (London: Simon And Schuster, 1992) 54.

The Mixing of Three Traditions

Along with the Confucian emphasis on carefully arranged marriages to preserve the foundation of the nation, romantic love in contemporary Japan is affected by two other traditions. One is the Heian tradition of courtly love, and the other is the domination of the popular Western notion of romantic marriages and happy endings.

In Japan during the Meiji period (1868- 1912), the famous poet Yosano Akiko's expression of sensuality in *tanka*, the traditional 31-syllable poem form, shook the samurai sensibilities of many conventional people.

kurogami no	A thousand lines
sensuji no	of black black hair
midare gami katsu	all tangled, tangled ---
omohi midare omohi	and tangled too
midaruru	my thoughts of love![147]

Around this time the positive word *renai*, which is the equivalent of the western idea of romantic love, came into popular use.[148] Prior to this, Japanese literature professor Konishi commented that "ancient Japan had a wide range of words to express the same idea, each with a slightly different shade of meaning and feel."[149] In a discussion of the expression of passionate love in Heian love poetry, Edwin A. Cranston highlights the Buddhist concept of love (passion or sexual desire) as a negative force:

> No sooner has he [young lover] feasted his eyes on the beauty of the two sisters than his feelings 'become disturbed' (*kokochi madoinikeri*). The verb *madou* means to go astray, lose the path, by extension to become lost in the blindness of passion. The aroused excited state is treated as a loss of sense control and a departure from the path of enlightenment.[150]

In other words, in Heian Japan, romantic or passionate love hindered one's journey to enlightenment. Cranston translates the "error of human entanglement in all forms of desire and attachment" as a "darkness of the heart."[151] In examining this further,

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[147] Sanford Goldstein and Shinoda Seishi, trans., *Tangled Hair: Selected Tanka from Midaregami by Yosano Akiko* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, Inc. 1987) poem no. 104.

[148] Konishi Jin'ichi, "Many Splendored Thing: Love in Japanese Literature," *Look Japan* Vol. 39.445 (April 1993) 119.

[149] Konishi 40.

[150] Edwin A. Cranston, "The Dark Path: Images of Longing in Japanese Love Poetry," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* Vol. 35 (1975) 61.

[151] Cranston, "The Dark Path," 61.

Janet Walker points out that despite the negative connotations that Buddhist beliefs imposed upon such descriptions of love in Heian love poetry, the message that poets wanted to convey was very different.

> …that the experience of love, by its very intensity, causes the lover to reject the Buddhist designation of enlightenment as a positive 'reality' and love as a negative 'attachment', and to posit the dreamlike, blissful experience of love as the highest, indeed the only reality.[152]

Therefore, in Heian Japan, a state of passionate love was both negative and appealing. In "Marriage Institutions in the Heian Period" William McCullough lists the normal considerations in Heian marriages as wealth, influence, prestige and political advantages.[153] Just as in the arranged marriages of the Tokugawa period, love was not necessarily a deciding factor for a marital relationship. Hence, a relationship based upon passion was elevated to a wonderful dreamlike state that was not rooted in reality and was often fleeting. This tendency in the Heian period to equate courtly (romantic) love with dreamlike bliss may contribute to a phenomenon that sociologist Merry White observes of Japanese young people today: " the arena of romance is often quite separate from the realm of marriage dreams or realities." [154] White goes on to discuss the fact that while the appeal of romance is strong amongst young Japanese people, the combination of romance, passion and socially approved companionship (marriage) is not necessarily the positive ideal that it is in North America.[155]

This North American ideal view of romantic love, in which love and marriage are equated, is well represented in Japan in the form of American romance movies that end with the hero and heroine entwined in a kiss. An example of this type of movie, that was very popular in Japan in 1993, is *Sleepless in Seattle*. The Japanese title for the movie is *Meguri Aetarà* which translates as 'if by chance we were able to meet' and alludes to the circumstances of fate that led to three chance encounters between the main characters played by actors Meg Ryan and Tom Hanks. The 'happy end' movie is described in Japanese as "a surprisingly heartfelt love story in which the magic of love and the mysteriousness of destiny are movingly depicted."[156] The sentence on the poster for the movie, while merely indicating the timeline of the story, could be said to reflect the very western aspects of romantic love in Japan because both Christmas Eve and Valentine's Day are recognized as 'special date' holidays: "Affection [*koi*] begins on Christmas Eve, love [*ai*] comes calling on Valentine's Day."[157]

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[152] Janet A. Walker, "Conventions of Love Poetry in Japan and the West," *Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese* Vol. 14.1 (1979) 31-32.

[153] William H. McCullough, "Marriage Institutions in Heian Japan," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* Vol. 27 (1967) 115.

[154] Merry White, *The Material Child: Coming of Age in Japan and America* (New York: The Free Press, 1993) 180.

[155] White 180.

It is interesting to note that when asked what the term 'romantic' means to them, many Japanese young people gave the following responses; starry skies, sunsets, lovers spending time alone, flowers, chocolates, candle light dinners, Christmas and Disneyland.[158] While starry skies, sunsets, and lovers spending time alone are things expressed in Japanese love poetry, the rest of the images are of distinctly western origin. Furthermore, the majority of answers to questions regarding the definition of a happy ending in a love story stressed the marriage of the main couple[159] as an important element. Overall, happy endings were indicated to be the most satisfying closure for a love story.[160] These results and the popularity of North American love stories in Japan[161] are evidence that western romantic love also influences young people in Japan today. However, as the following discussion will reveal, romantic love in Heisei Japan is an interesting mixture of Confucian, Heian and western traditions.

In the 1959 ethnography *Village Japan*, the authors explain that marriages based strictly on love have long been associated with love suicides and other tragedies.[162] The playwright Chikamatsu's love suicide plays are examples of this.[163]

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[156] Japanese movie handbill for *Sleepless in Seattle*, Dec. 1993.

[157] Japanese movie handbill for *Sleepless in Seattle*, Dec. 1993.

[158] See Appendix C, question 5.

[159] See Appendix C, question 3.

[160] See Appendix C, question 1.

[161] Hendry, *Understanding Japanese Society*, 115.

[162] Richard K. Beardsley, John W. Hall and Robert E. Ward, *Village Japan* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1959) 317.

[163] See Donald Keene, *The Major Plays of Chikamatsu* (New York: University of Columbia Press, 1969).

In the late twentieth century as romantic love and marriage converge, Gen-Xers are finding it increasingly difficult to marry because, in the desperate pursuit for romantic love, the criteria for the ideal mate among women are becoming more and more unrealistic. It seems that it is men, not women who are having the most difficulty finding someone to marry because women have set unrealistic standards.

> In the 1970's it was common for sociologists in Japan to assert that marriage and romance were separate experiences and that passionate romance was not a necessary criterion for a viable relationship. Now women are regarded as more inclined to seek a romantic relationship than men.[164]

Generally speaking, young women in Japan think very carefully about their future with regard to marriage. Their prospective mates should be a certain height, be willing to cook, and they should work for a good company and have a high salary. They are very aware that decisions they make concerning their career and lifestyle choices will have an impact on the kind of marriage they will have. As Joy Hendry says, "this kind of preparation may sound rather callous to those of us who are brought up entirely under the spell of the syndrome of romantic love, but Japanese women tend to be very practical when planning their lives."[165] According to a 1998 report by the Associated Press on a Japanese government survey, "among Japanese single women aged 25 to 29, some 27 percent have 'no will' to get married.[166] Perhaps this is due to a lack of 'supermen' who can meet their very high expectations for husbands. The following are the accounts of the marriages of two Japanese women who have both followed very specific, although very different courses.

An Urban Marriage

Mieko[167] is 29 years old. She has lived in Tokyo for most of her life with her mother, father and younger brother. Like most young Japanese women Mieko has a plan for her life. She attended a junior college for two years and obtained a kindergarten teaching license. Then she went to the England for two years to improve her English and see the world. While in England, Mieko fell in love with a married man. Naturally, the circumstances of this relationship did not lend themselves to a happy ending. The relationship was terminated leaving a lonely Mieko to pick up the pieces. Mieko returned to Japan at the age of 24. Her goal from that point on was to find a suitable man and marry him. When asked why marriage was so important she replied, "I have done my own thing and now it is time to look for a husband because a woman is most attractive in her late twenties. If I wait any longer, I won't find a husband".

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[164] Applbaum 39.

[165] Hendry, *Understanding Japanese Society*, 149.

[166] "Marriage Without Merit," *Globe and Mail*, Fall 1998.

[167] This is a true account. Names have been changed.

With that Mieko went home, met a man two years older than her who works for a major electronics company and was married by the age of twenty- six. She and her husband live in their own apartment in Tokyo and have just purchased a van large enough to transport future family members. With the goal of marriage achieved, Mieko's next step is to get pregnant, quit her full time job, and become a housewife.

Rural Versus Urban

Within a culture, various factors determine the way in which people live. In other words, life in a metropolis will be very different than life in a rural area. While Mieko's situation may be a very typical scenario for a young woman in an urban setting, this may not be the case in rural Japan. Take for example, Rie.[168] Rie has lived in a town with a population of 5000 all of her life. While living at home, she attended a nearby junior college where she majored in English literature. Her education, coupled with her volunteer activities with the Rotary club and participation in a two month exchange in Canada, have enabled Rie to achieve a very high level of fluency in the English language. Rie is a unique mixture of old and new because her international experiences have given her a cosmopolitan outlook on life, while lessons in traditional Japanese arts such as the Japanese harp (koto), flower arranging (*ikebana*) and the tea ceremony (*sâdo)* give her an air of Japanese elegance. With her talent with languages, Rie could have a promising career as an interpreter. However, her situation is complicated by the fact that she is the only child of a well established, traditional family. As a young woman, Rie has an enormous responsibility. She must marry a man whose own family will allow him to become part of his wife's family and give up his family name for hers. In addition to these requirements, he must be willing to give up any plans that he had for his own career and take over the Rie's father's roofing company. A situation like this does not lend itself to the 'love match' route. And for 24 year-old Rie *omiai* became the only option. However, after several unpromising meetings arranged by a go-between, Rie set out to find a husband with the correct qualifications on her own and was successful. She and Toshiaki were married in the same month as her twenty-fifth birthday. Toshiaki has since given up his enviable job with a popular retail company to move in with her extended family and run the business.

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[168] This is a true account. Names have been changed.

In contrast to Mieko's 'love-match', Rie's marriage is very much a business transaction in which both parties Rie and Toshiaki, have made sacrifices to fulfill familial obligations. Although Rie found Toshiaki on her own, she says that she does not love him. This is complicated by the fact that up until her wedding day, she was involved with another man. Indeed, to a young woman greatly influenced by the ideals of the romantic love portrayed in English literature and western movies, this would seem to be a tragic turn of events. However, Rie states that out of respect for her family, she will comply and "*gaman shimasu* " (literally, "I will endure it). It is interesting to note that while Mieko's marriage is termed as a 'love marriage' it is, still, part of a carefully executed plan much like Rie's arranged marriage. These two forms of marriage both exist in today's Japan. The society they exist in reflects the conflict between the two.

Valentine's Day

The ultimate celebration of romantic love, Valentine's Day, has taken on a distinct Japanese flavour. In the article "Sweet Love and Women's Place: Valentine's Day, Japan Style", Millie Creighton states that this very commercialized event is indicative of changes in the relationships between men and women since World War II.[169] On February 14, single women in Japan target the object of their desire and express their feelings for them with chocolate. It is not until White Day, one month later that women find out whether or not the feelings are mutual when the men have the opportunity to reciprocate with white chocolate, handkerchiefs, or socks. People in Japan feel that Valentine's Day gives women the chance to express themselves freely: "Valentine's Day [in Japan] is the only occasion or chance when 'being men or women' becomes the focus of attention. Moreover, the leading part is played by women. We plan to value this occasion."[170] However, these two 'western' holidays are also affected by the traditional Japanese practice of reciprocity. This is evident because an obligation exists for Office Ladies to give *giri choko* (literally obligation chocolate) to their male coworkers. This act is reciprocated on White Day. Thus, romantic love is overshadowed by a longstanding Japanese custom.

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[169] Millie R. Creighton, "Sweet Love and Women's Place: Valentine's Day, Japan Style," *Journal of Popular Culture* Vol. 27.3 (1993) 1.

Christmas

Another western holiday that has come to be linked with the western notion of romantic love in Japan is Christmas. In the late 1980's Christmas became the trendiest day on which to take your true love out for a romantic night on the town. As Anne Pepper remarks, "Christmas Eve became the most important night of the year to have a date – no self-respecting single in Japan would admit to spending the evening alone."[171] Just as Valentines' Day has been injected with the traditional element, *giri*, a Japanese Christmas reflects the tradition of *omiai*. While very commercial in its approach, department stores, hotels and other companies that profit from the extravagant amounts spent at Christmas, provide services in the form of mixers, to aid those who cannot get a date for the big day.[172] In a sense, these institutions are just taking on the role of the traditional *nakodo* or go-between who plays the most important role in an arranged marriage. Hence, despite the fact that the two most important romantic holidays in Japan, Valentine's day and Christmas, were originally western celebrations, they still are related to the traditional Japanese arranged marriages.

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[170] Creighton 3.

[171] Anne Pepper, "Christmas in Japan," *Mangajin* No. 31(1993) 15.

[172] Pepper 15.

Electronic Love

In this age of Japanese romantic love, as young Japanese people become more aware of themselves as individuals as opposed to being part of a group, people are finding it harder to meet people that they are compatible with without the help of a *nakodo*. Popular culture offers some unique forms of *omiai* for people to meet people. Examples of this are TV Dating shows such as *Neruton* and *Kiss Kiss* on which perfect strangers meet, talk, ask each other on dates and are often turned down on national television.[173] Another example of a nontraditional version of the traditional *omiai* are the computer dating services and internet chat sites on which people can be formally introduced to each other.[174] Through the medium of mass media, young people are carrying on an age-old tradition.

Romantic Love in Trendy Dramas and the Individualized Self

In the book *Words of Love*, Eileen Fallon talks of love as an individualizing emotion.

> Love is an individualizing emotion; to be in love is to be more fully aware of oneself and of the beloved than ever before. It is for this reason perhaps that in each of its early periods of development an upsurge of the romance coincided with a development of awareness of the importance of the individual; in fact the rise of romance is in direct response to the rise of the individual.[175]

This idea can been seen in the trendy dramas that are popular in Japan. If we consider Honda Shiro's discussion of Japanese popular culture once more, there is a connection between the depiction of young people and their encounters with romantic love in these dramas and Fallon's definition of love as an individualizing emotion. Honda states that in popular culture in Japan today Japanese people are portrayed as assertive and independent, having the freedom to pursue their romantic impulses.[176] These are characteristics that were not ideal images in pre-war Japan during which time self-sacrifice was important and individuality was suppressed.[177]

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[173] See Kim Eastham, "TV Dating: Mating for Ratings," *Mangajin* No. 33 (1994): 10-14 and 56.

[174] See T.K. Ito and Virginia Murray, "Computerized Matchmaking," *Mangajin* No. 11 (1991): 16-20.

[175] Eileen Fallon, *Words of Love: A Complete Guide to Romance Fiction* (New York: Garland Publishing Co., 1984) 5.

[176] Honda 78.

[177] Honda 78.

As Honda indicates, there is more emphasis on the individual in the Japan of the nineties than in previous decades. The correlation between the popularity of romantic love and the emphasis on the individual is reflected in trendy dramas such as *Love Generation* and *The Most Important Person*. In *Love Generation* the creative Teppei finds himself thrust into the world of advertising sales where suits and short hair are the only accepted norm. He and Riko are both two people trying to find true love in the fast-paced world of Tokyo and they are constantly reminded that true love is not an easy thing to deal with. However, until Riko's father steps in and suggests that Riko should look over some of the potential husbands that a *nakodo* found for her, the young couple tries to make their love work. Eventually, despite all the odds, the audience is given a view of wedding photos at the end of the drama. Joy Hendry observes that marriages, such as Teppei's and Riko's, based on romantic love are attractive to the younger generation because it implies that they have the freedom to make the decision for themselves rather than having a *nakodo* decide for them.[178] Yet many young Japanese people are glad for the services of a *nakodo* and they can still decide whether or not they will accept the arrangement.

An interesting thing is that while there are many dramas in which the two main characters end up living happily ever after together, there are equally as many in which they do not end up marrying each other. *The Most Important Person* is one of these dramas. Kôhei and Miwa have been friends since elementary school and they find themselves together again when Miwa returns to her family after graduating from college. The drama follows their relationship through six years of 'will they or won't they' scenarios until they finally confess their mutual affection and consummate their love. The problem is that by that point, they both have other people vying for their love and ultimately obligation triumphs over passion as they go their own separate ways.

Merry White discusses another example of the portrayal of this type of unrequited love in the Japanese young adult magazine, *CanCam*:

> In all issues there are also illustrated short stories, whose major theme is romance, poetic stories of unrequited or impossible love, accompanied by misty illustrations of

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[178] Joy Hendry, *Marriage in Changing Japan* (London: Croom Helm, 1981) 117.

> a girl counting daisy petals or writing poetry on a misty hill. Unfulfilled love and what would be to Americans unhappy endings are a feature of these stories.[179]

CanCam also published a manual for arranged marriages in its October 1989 issue.[180] At the end of her discussion, White concludes that by means of a popular magazine, traditional views about love and marriage are being directed at young women.[181] This idea helps to explain why although *Love Generation* offers a 'happy wedding ending', the theme running through the whole drama is 'true love never runs smooth'. This slogan is often a subtle reminder on billboards throughout scenes in the drama. Teppei even has a poster of this billboard on his refrigerator. A crystal apple that is also part of the poster pops up in various scenes. While I cannot verify the reliability of the following explanation for the apple, this fan 'quotes' the producer on an unofficial drama web site:

> Everyone is probably wondering about the crystal apple, right? […]
> According to the producer, the deep meaning behind the crystal apple is that there is only one true love and that is Adam and Eve — hence, the apple. But why crystal? Because it's a very fragile element. When you look through it, things looks upside down, symbolizing Teppei's torned [sic] apart between Mizuhara [high school girlfriend] and Riko.[182]

The juxtaposition of this slogan and the fragile apple, with the theme song "Happy Ending"[183] and the title *Love Generation* creates a very mixed message about romantic love in Japan in the nineties. The audience, although enchanted by the beautiful wedding photographs at the end, knows that the relationship will be a hard one because of the unstable, passionate love upon which it is built. Similarly, in *The Most Important Person* romantic love does not triumph at all because the hero, Kôhei, and his true love Miwa realize that romantic love is not a strong enough basis for a marriage.

In the last episode of the drama, when Kôhei's sense of obligation to his fiancée, Hiroko and her parents gets the better of him, he realizes that he cannot be with Miwa. In anguish he tells Miwa that he does not know what to do any more. Miwa selflessly says the following.

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[179] White 180.

[180] White 180.

[181] White 181.

[182] *Love Generation Special: Behind the Scenes*, online, Internet, 30 Mar. 1998.

[183] Ôtaki Eîchi, "*Shiawasena Ketsumatsu* [Happy Ending]," CD single, The Niagara Enterprises, 1997.

> Me liking you, that was just an illusion. It was probably the same for you, too. Our love for one another was nothing more than an illusion. So don't worry. Besides, I haven't refused the marriage proposal and I'll probably get married before you do! We are nothing more than childhood friends. Go to Hiroko and don't worry about me.

Thus, romantic love is not dependable. Miwa and Kôhei only imagined that they were in love. Kôhei's potential marriage to Hiroko, already approved by her traditional parents, is a much safer bet. In the final scene of this drama, Kôhei's words further enforce the idea that romantic love and marriage are not ideal together:

> Kôhei: You know, since I've gotten married [to Hiroko] and have been separated from you, there's something that I finally somehow understand. And that is, that you are the most precious person in my life.
>
> Miwa: Kôhei!
>
> Kôhei: But… that's why even if our lives go in different directions, I don't feel that sad. This may sound strange but, ever since that night [they made love for the first time], I've felt like you have been with me constantly. How can I put it? It's like we're in the same school, but in different classrooms. When I think of it like that, I feel reassured. […] You and I will always be together. Together forever.

Kôhei's final words, "together forever', are reminiscent of Heian notions of love existing on a higher plane than reality because he and Miwa will always be connected through their souls. Thus, their love exists on a different plane than the love that he will nurture with Hiroko which is grounded in Confucian values of loyalty. Both the Kôhei/Miwa saga in *The Most Important Person* and the fragile relationship that Teppei and Miwa share reflect the longstanding belief that marriage and romantic love are not necessarily a positive combination in twentieth-century Japan.

Conclusion

Romantic love associated with marriage is a relatively recent phenomenon in modern Japan. The approach that contemporary, young Japanese people take to romance is a dynamic mixture of traditional values that are rooted in Confucianism, the Heian 'unreal' idealization of romantic love, the West's preoccupation with happy endings and a new sense of individuality. Both real life situations and the depiction of romance in popular culture suggest that a love marriage is still not a universally accepted positive ideal in Japan. As we see in Kôhei and Miwa's 'unhappy' love story, for Generation X 'true love never runs smooth', but as long as they remember that, they can enjoy the thrill for a while. Just as this chapter has provided a look at love in Heisei Japan through the lens of popular culture, chapter four will provide a detailed examination of romantic love in Heian Japan as it is depicted in the romances of the period.

Chapter 4
Love at First Imagination
Romantic Love in Heian Japan

> They [romances] have set down and preserved happenings from the age of the gods to our own. *The Chronicles of Japan* and the rest are a mere fragment of the whole truth. It is your romances that fill in the details.[184]

It is ironic that these are the words of Genji, the princely hero of one of Japan's, and perhaps the world's, earliest romances, *The Tale of Genji*. These words are part of the famous 'Apology for Fiction' section of the novel in which it is said that the author uses her male protagonist to defend fiction in a society in which romances were a woman's frivolous pastime and were frowned upon by men[185]. As Genji suggests, the romance literature of the Heian period reveals a plethora of information about romantic love in eleventh-century Japan. Within the pages of the fairy tale *The Tale of the Lady Ochikubo*[186], the poem tale *The Tales of Ise*[187], the poetry of Izumi Shikibu[188], Sei Shônagon's *Pillow Book*[189] and, of course, *The Tale of Genji*, the rituals of Heian romantic love are played out again and again: the beautifully coloured silk sleeve of a kimono emerging from beneath a screen; a fragrant waft of incense; the shy silhouette of a woman barely visible; secret midnight rendezvous; a letter composed on fine paper in an elegant hand; parting at dawn; a forbidden love. These images have been captured over and over again in the poetry and fiction of Heian Japan. A romantic affair would start with the fragment of a glimpse, a sound, or a fragrance. The following is an examination of the 'details' of Heian society that the romances of the period offer, starting with the innocent beginnings of a love affair and leading to the often bittersweet end.

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[184] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 437.

[185] This is a widely accepted interpretation of this particular passage. See Wm. Theodore de Bary, ed. *Sources of Japanese Tradition, Vol. I* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964) 176.

[186] In Japanese *Ochikubo Monogatari*. It is thought that the tale was written in the last half of the tenth century before Murasaki Shikibu wrote *The Tale of Genji*. It resembles the western fairytale *Cinderella* because it has a beautiful young woman, a wicked stepmother and stepsisters, a noble lover and a happy ending.

[187] H. Jay Harris, trans., *The Tales of* Ise (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1972). In Japanese, *Ise Monogatari*. It was written in the early 900's. There is speculation that Murasaki Shikibu may have used the poem tale romance as a model for *The Tale of Genji*.

[188] *The Izumi Shikibu Diary* (ca. 1003) (*Izumi Shikibu nikki*) focuses on the poet Izumi Shikibu's affair with Prince Atsumichi, the half-brother of her lover Prince Tametaka. The affair occurred after Tametaka's death.

Heian Heroes

What kind of man caused a Heian woman's heart to race? The answer to this lies in the heroes of the romances. One of the earliest heroes of Heian literature was a real person who became a legendary figure, the famous *tanka* poet of the ninth century, Ariwara Narihira. His 31-syllable poems are included in both the *Kokinshû* (*Collection of [Japanese] Poems Ancient and Modern,* ca. 920) and *The Tales of Ise.* The legend of Narihira as a dashing lover seems to have become a model for later literary heroes, including Prince Genji (The Shining Prince) himself[190]. The following poem from the *Kokinshû* illustrates Narihira's ability to perceive and convey the mystical dual nature of love:[191]

Kakikurasu	I am lost in the
kokoro no yami ni	total darkness of the heart—
madoiniki	people of this world
yume utsutsu to wa	you decide for me if love
yohito sadame yo	was a dream or reality[192]

The *Kokinshû* also contains poems attributed to Narihira[193] that allude to the idea of the lover as vulnerable.

Aki no no ni	Wetter than sleeves that
sasa wakeshi asa no	have pushed through fields of bamboo
sode yori mo	grass on an autumn morn
awade koshi yo zo	are mine when I return
hiji masarikeru	on a night we did not meet[194]

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[189] *Makura no Sôshi* (ca. 1000) is a collection of lists and observations recorded by the court lady Sei Shônagon, a contemporary of Izumi and Murasaki Shikibu.

[190] Earl Miner, Robert E. Morrell, and Hiroko Odagiri, *The Princeton Companion to Classical Japanese Literature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985) 143.

[191] Janet A. Walker, "Conventions of Love Poetry in Japan and the West" *Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese* Vol. 14.1 (1979) 32.

[192] Laurel Rasplica Rodd, trans., *Kokinshû: A Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984) 234.

[193] Janet A. Walker indicates that the author of this poem is Narihira, see Walker 41. However, in the *Kokinshû* Rodd notes that the author is anonymous but that the poem did appear in *The Tale of Ise*. In the tale the passage begins with "Long ago there was a man…" which is usually associated with Narihira.

[194] Rodd 227-228. In Heian poetry, the image of wet sleeves was an allusion for weeping out of loneliness for a loved one.

It is these types of *tanka* combined with his representation in *The Tales of Ise* that have contributed to the heroic yet vulnerable image of the legendary lover Ariwara Narihira. Narihira's virtues are summed up well by Ki no Tsurayuki's[195] "half-grudging, half-admiring comment in the preface to the *Kokinshû* that Narihira's mind (or heart) was too great and his words too few well captures the intense intellectuality of his style."[196] Thus, readers today have an image of Narihira as an articulate man susceptible to the whims of love.

Likewise, the ability of Izumi Shikibu's lover Prince Atsumichi to express his intense love for her is revealed in her diary through poems such as the following:

> "I was moved by the fearsome howling of the wind and wondered how it must affect you:

Karehatete	Lonely in her
Ware yori hoka ni	withered solitude with none
Tou hito mo	Save me to visit her,
Arashi no kaze o	what feelings must be hers,
Ikaga kikuran	hearing the storm-wind rage?

> The very thought of it was more than I could bear."
> His words brought her a glow of pleasure.[197]

Because he admits to being moved by forces of nature, the reader is made aware not only of the prince's feelings but also of his vulnerability. Another of Prince Atsumichi's admirable qualities may have been his willingness to defy acceptable societal norms in order to reach out to a lonely woman with a rather scandalous reputation.

The most famous romantic hero of the Heian period is Prince Hikaru Genji created by Murasaki Shikibu. In his critical work *The Bridge of Dreams: A Poetics of 'The Tale of Genji'*, Shirane Haruo makes the following observation of the man so aptly nicknamed "the Shining One."

> Genji becomes a great lover-hero not simply because he conquers women but because he has also mastered the "arts" – poetry, calligraphy, music – of courtship. The same applies to Genji's political triumphs, which are measured by a cultural and aesthetic code that transcends the usual notions of power and influence. Genji consolidates his power not as a scheming and ambitious politician but as a man of

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[195] Ki no Tsurayuki (Ca. 872-945) was the compiler of the *Kokinshû* as well as a noted *tanka* poet.

[196] Miner, Morell and Odagiri 143.

[197] Edwin A. Cranston, trans., *The Izumi Shikibu Diary: A Romance of the Heian Court* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969) 178.

> *miyabi* (literally, "courtliness"), as a noble devoted to the acquisition of courtly graces, good taste, and aesthetic sensibility.[198]

In other words, Prince Genji was a well-rounded man with a natural grace and elegance. "He [Genji] had grown into a lad of such beauty that he hardly seemed meant for this world."[199] Throughout the novel, the author of the *Genji* bestows praise such as this upon the prince. As if to remind the reader that Genji was indeed 'the Shining Prince', Murasaki Shikibu remarks on his talent in the arts that were so important to courtship.

> When he was seven he went through the ceremonial reading of the Chinese classics, and never before had there been so fine a performance.[200]
>
> I need not speak of his accomplishments in the compulsory subjects, the classics and the like. When it came to music his flute and koto made the heavens echo- but to recount all his virtues would, I fear, give rise to a suspicion that I distort the truth.[201]

It is doubtless that these natural talents and extraordinary good looks allowed Genji the great liberties he took with many women. There are episodes in the novel in which Murasaki Shikibu depicts the prince almost forcing his amorous advances upon women.[202] The following passage is from "The Safflower" chapter when Genji visits a princess of lower status and forces his way into her chambers.

> He talked on, now joking and now earnestly entreating, but there was no further response. It was all very strange — her mind did not seem to work as others did. Finally losing patience, he slid the door open. Tayu [the lady's nurse] was aghast — he had assured her that he would behave himself. Though concerned for the poor princess, she slipped off to her own room as if nothing had happened. The princess's young women were less disturbed. Such misdemeanors were easy to forgive when the culprit was so uniquely handsome.[203]

In other words, Genji's questionable actions were easily forgiven simply because he was 'the Shining One'.

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[198] Shirane Haruo, *The Bridge of Dreams: A Poetics of 'The Tale of Genji'* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987) 30.

[199] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 13.

[200] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 13.

[201] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 14.

[202] See particularly the "Lavender" chapter in which Genji has sexual relations with his stepmother Fujitsubo and the "Heartvine" chapter in which he crosses the line with the heroine Murasaki and becomes lover rather than a father figure.

[203] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 120.

Despite Genji's tendency to pursue passionately his romantic desires, he was a loyal man capable of being deeply affected by the emotions of others. In the words of Murasaki Shikibu, "Genji was a generous man and he did not abandon women to whom he had been even slightly drawn."[204] His continuous support of the orphaned safflower princess mentioned above, whose bright red nose made it difficult for her to find a husband, is an example of his loyalty.[205] His genuine grief after the death of his first wife Lady Aoi, with whom he did not even seem to get along, illustrates his vulnerability as a man and a husband.

> ...he was unable to sleep. He thought over their years together. Why had he so carelessly told himself that she would one day understand? Why had he allowed himself silly flirtations, the smallest of them sure to anger her? He had let her carry her hostility to the grave. The regrets were strong, but useless. [...]
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | *Kagiri areba* | Weeds obey rules. |
> | *Usuzumi goro mo* | Mine are the shallower hue. |
> | *Asa keredo* | But tears plunge |
> | *Namida zoso de* | my sleeves |
> | *Fuchito nasikaru* [206] | into the deepest wells. |
>
> He closed his eyes in prayer, a handsomer man in sorrow than in happiness.[207]

When his two true loves, first Fujitsubo and then several years later Murasaki, pass away, Genji once again reveals the depth of his emotions in a subtle and elegant fashion.[208] Even in times of great sadness "The Shining Prince" is ever the eloquent, refined hero.

Prince Genji, himself, passes away before the end of the novel and is succeeded by his assumed son, Kaoru and his grandson, Niou.

> The shining Genji was dead, and there was no one quite like him. It would be irreverent to speak of the Reizei emperor. Niou, the third son of the present emperor, and Kaoru, the young son of Genji's Third Princess, had grown up in the same house and both were thought by the world to be uncommonly handsome, but somehow they did not shine with the same radiance. They were sensitive, cultivated young men, and the fact that they were rather more loudly acclaimed than Genji had been at their age was very probably because they had been so close to him.[209]

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[204] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 387.

[205] See Seidensticker, *The Genji*, Chapter 6 "The Safflower" and Chapter 23 "The First Warbler".

[206] The classical Japanese versions of the poetry in the passages from the *Genji* and *The Tale of the Lady Ochikubo* are taken from Abe Akio, Akiyama Ken, and Imai Gene, trans. *Nihon koten bungaku zenshû* vol. 10 and 12-17 (Tokyo: Shogakkan, 1974).

[207] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 171.

[208] See Seidensticker, *The Genji* 340 and 716-722.

[209] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 735.

As is evident in this passage, no one could replace the brilliant Genji as a Heian hero. However, thanks to familial association, his descendents carry on his legacy for the remainder of the novel. All the legendary heroes discussed above possess a cultured sensitivity with which they carry out their affairs in a manner that appealed to the romantic sensibilities of readers of Heian romances.

Feminine Mystique

One may wonder what type of woman Prince Genji and his other fictional counterparts sought out. Just like the men, Heian women were equally adept in the rituals of courtship. Although women were forbidden to study Chinese (the language of politics) they were all literate in their native Japanese language and well versed in the *Kokinshû*, and the classical literature of the period. This knowledge, combined with a talent for calligraphy made it possible for women to participate in witty and romantic poem and letter exchanges with their lovers. The poet Izumi Shikibu is a good example of an accomplished Heian woman whose "fame as a poet is deeply involved with her reputation as a passionate woman."[210] Even the oppressed Lady Ochikubo is capable of captivating her suitor with a response to his poem.

> Meanwhile the Lord had sent this poem-

Yoso ni te ha	Absence the stronger
Nahowa ga koi wo	Has made my love; let us be
Masu kagami	As are a figure
Utsuru kage to ha	And its shade in a mirror-
Ikade naramashi	Ever inseparable

> The same day the Lady answered for the first time-

Mi wo saranu	Inseparable
Kage to miete ha	Though now we may seem to be,
Masu kagami	This thought saddens me-
Ha kanaku utsuru	Your love may be as fleeting
Kotozo kanashiki	As shade in a mirror

> The poem was written so charmingly that when the Lord read it his face expressed his hopes and his affection.[211]

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[210] Cranston 3.

[211] Wilfred Whitehouse and Eizo Yanagisawa, trans., *The Tale of the Lady Ochikubo: A Tenth Century Japanese Novel* (New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday and Company Inc., 1971) 32-33.

Similarly, while Prince Genji is in exile at Suma, his ladies in the capital correspond with him. His lifelong companion, Murasaki's reply to one of his letters contains a poem that stirs Genji's heart.

> And Murasaki's reply was of course deeply moving. There was this poem:
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | *Urabito no* | Taking the brine |
> | *Shihokumu sode ni* | on that strand, |
> | *Kurabe mi yo* | let him compare |
> | *Namiji he datsuru* | His dripping sleeves |
> | *Yoru no koromo wo* | with these night sleeves of mine. |
>
> The robes that came with it were beautifully dyed and tailored. She did everything so well. [...] Thoughts of her, day and night, became next to unbearable.[212]

This passage illustrates the hold that a woman with poetic skill could have over a man of sensitivity.

It was also important for a woman to possess a flare for music. In the following scene the Akashi lady, the future mother of Genji's daughter, plays the koto as a farewell tribute for the prince before he returns to the capital after a sojourn in the provinces.

> She was apparently in the mood for music. Softly she tuned the instrument, and her touch suggested very great polish and elegance. It was in the modern style, and enough to bring cries of wonder from anyone who knew a little about music. The koto of the lady before him was quiet and calm, and so rich in overtones as almost to arouse envy.[213]

Being a skilled musician himself, Genji cannot help but be moved by the Akashi lady's artistic talents. Her music had the power to conjure up the old longings for Fujistubo who was his ideal in every way because "there was no one really like her."[214] In Genji's eyes, Fujitsubo's only rival was the equally accomplished and graceful Murasaki.

In the narrow world of the Heian court, women of the aristocracy, such as Murasaki and Fujitsubo, were hidden away from the world behind voluminous layers of silk kimonos, long flowing locks of hair, fans, decorated screens, and bamboo blinds. For a Heian nobleman the world of women was a translucent mixture of music, fragrances and suggestions.[215] Such seclusion meant that catching a fleeting glimpse of a woman could be an erotic experience for men because women were constantly hidden from them.

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[212] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 233.

[213] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 266.

[214] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 18.

> A group of ladies-in-waiting was seated behind the bamboo blinds. Their cherry-coloured Chinese jackets hung loosely over their shoulders with the collars pulled back; they wore robes of wisteria, golden yellow, and other colours, many of which showed beneath the blind covering the half-shutter.[216]

It is likely that the visibility of the robes in the scene described by the Heian court woman Sei Shônangon was carefully orchestrated by the ladies-in-waiting rather than a careless mistake. In *The World of the Shining Prince*, Ivan Morris describes two of these types of fashion devices that women employed in order to attract the attention of men without revealing more of themselves than was socially acceptable. The first was *oshidashi*, the practice of letting carefully dyed kimono sleeves protrude from beneath the curtain of state while talking to a man, and the second was *idashiguruma* in which women let their multi-layered sleeves hang enticingly outside the carriage when they were on an outing.[217] In the "Heartvine" chapter of *The Tale of Genji*, brightly coloured sleeves seem to add life to a festival in much the same way that young women's prom dresses might brighten up a dance today: "The sleeves that showed beneath the curtains fulfilled in their brightness and variety all the festive promise." [218] The trained eye of an aristocratic man could discern a trace of a woman's personality from just the hint of a sleeve, and his desire to become more intimate with her could prompt him to get a better view.

If a sleeve triggered a man's desire to become more intimate with a woman, his next step was normally to get a better look at the woman of his dreams. Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen argues in the article "The Operation of the Lyrical Mode in the *Genji Monogatari*" that because *kaimami* or "catching a glimpse of a woman behind a barrier" is a recurring theme in Heian romantic tales and poetry, it can be seen as an "archetypal motif signifying the inception of love." The mere suggestion of femininity, "the momentary, elusive glimpse that leaves the subject yearning for more", captures the imagination of Heian men and leads them to pursue this subtle hint of beauty. [219] The most famous example of *kaimami* is from the opening episode of *The Tales of Ise*.

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[215] See Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince*, Chapter 8, 199-250.

[216] Morris, *The Pillow Book* 34.

[217] Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince* 204-205.

[218] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 160.

> Once a man who had recently come of age went hunting on his estate in Kasuga, near the former capital of Nara, where he caught a secret glimpse of two extremely attractive sisters who lived in the village. Startled and excited by the sight of such beauty in the ruined capital, he tore a strip from the skirt of his hunting robe, which was imprinted with a moss-fern design, inscribed a verse, and sent it to them.[220]

This type of romanticized voyeurism is depicted over and over in *The Tale of Genji* and seems to run in Prince Genji's family. The young Murasaki's fate as Genji's lifelong lover is sealed when he first lays eyes upon her through a wattled fence. "What a discovery! It was for such unforseen rewards that his amorous followers were so constantly on the prowl. Such a rare outing for him, and it had brought such a find! She was a perfectly beautiful child. He was beginning to make plans: the child must stand in the place of the one whom she so resembled."[221],[222] Genji does manage to spirit the child away and they eventually become lovers. Genji's preoccupation with Murasaki puts stress on his official marriage to Lady Aoi. Unlike the romantic beginnings of his relationship with Murasaki, that marriage was arranged by the bride's and the groom's fathers. Neither Genji nor Aoi seem particularly enthralled with one another because the excitement of courtship is lacking.

The Stuff Fairytales Were Made of

Just like the marriage of Prince Genji and Lady Aoi, Heian court marriages were often dictated by politics because men married their daughters off to powerful suitors in order to gain a higher public position. How then could vulnerable, sensitive, and elegant men like Prince Genji find happiness in such a strictly governed environment? If the love stories are any indication of the society, then the answer is romantic intrigue outside the confines of marriage. As Earl Miner notes "given the arranged nature of marriages of the high nobility and the serious affront of an affair with a woman of the same social status as one's consort, romantic practice and romantic notion often involved the highborn lover with a woman of lower stature."[223] Indeed, this is the theme of *The Tale of the Lady Ochikubo,* in which the unfortunate orphaned Ochikubo is courted and rescued from the grips of her wicked stepmother by a high ranking major-general. At the end of *The Diary of Izumi Shikibu,* Prince Atsumichi's first wife leaves him because he has brought Izumi Shikibu – a woman of ill repute and thus low status – to live with him in the main house.

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[219] Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen, "The Operation of the Lyrical Mode in the *Genji Monogatari*," *Ukifune: Love in 'The Tale of Genji'*, ed. Pekarik (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982) 33. Ramirez-Christensen states that while *kaimami* literally means "peering through a gap in the hedge," it alludes to the idea of a man "catching a glimpse of a woman behind a barrier."

[220] Shirane 47. I prefer Shirane's rendering of the text to that of Harris. See Harris, 35.

[221] Here "the one whom she so resembled" refers to Fujitsubo, Genji's infatuation and also his stepmother.

[222] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 89.

Similarly, romantic themes are exploited further with the illicit pursuit of women belonging to other men. Perhaps the ultimate depiction of the pursuit of forbidden love is found within the 54 chapters of *The Tale of Genji,* a "pattern set in the very first chapter, "Kiritsubo," with the love of Genji's royal father for his relatively lowborn mother."[224] Genji himself is guilty of numerous class transgressions with Yugao, the Akashi Lady and other women of a lower social status. The fact that a woman belonged to another man did not deter Genji from his amorous pursuits. Evidence of this lies in the Shining One's intimate relationship with his own stepmother, Fujitsubo, and his endless attempts to bed the Suzaku Emperor's soon-to-be consort, Oborozukiyo, in the name of passion. In later chapters of *the Genji*, his best friend's son, Kashiwagi, fathers the child [Kaoru] of Genji's own wife, the Third Princess, and Kaoru and Niou are both entwined in secret relationships with the beautiful Ukifune. It is from these illicit, often awkward, but always very passionate, relationships that the true essence of a Heian romance is born. That essence is *mono no aware.*

***Mono no Aware*: The Essence of Love**

All of the relationships discussed above reflect one of the most valued aesthetic qualities of the Heian period. The classical scholar of the Tokugawa period, Motoori

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[223] Earl Miner, "The Heroine: Identity, Recurrence, Destiny," *Ukifune: Love in 'The Tale of Genji'*," ed. Pekarik (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982) 69.

Norinaga (1730-1801) devoted years of study to *The Tale of Genji* and concluded that the tale was the ultimate expression of the literary ideal *mono no aware.*[225] This term defies translation into a single English term because the aesthetic quality it embodies is determined by the context in which the term is used. Literally, *mono* means 'things', *no* means 'of', and *aware* is an expression of deep feeling. The following is a description of *mono no aware* by Motoori Norinaga:

> To spell it out: with all the variety of things in this world, to savor myriad deeds in one's heart, to absorb the essence of myriad deeds in one's heart according to what one sees with the eye, hears with the ear, touches with one's being– that is to know the essence of things, to know the *aware* of things.[226]

In the introduction to her translation of *The Kagerô Diary,* a literary precursor to *The Tale of Genji*, Sonja Arntzen defines the *aware* of Heian Japan as a "fine tuned sensitivity to the transience of things, an awareness that things are most precious just when their loss is imminent."[227] The following is the definition for *mono no aware,* devised by Akiyama Ken, the noted Japanese scholar of Heian literature.

> …it can be said that the specific things that invoke *aware* are indirectly sensed and felt. Specifically, [these objects are] the love and sentiment central to the relations between parents and children and men and women within the context of the fate of human existence and its unavoidable sadness, separation, and suffering, and, poetry and literature, music and art as well as the beauty that exists in natural scenes and the periodic changing of the seasons. The emotion or feeling that takes root and is inspired by each of these things is *mono no aware*. The tendency towards pathos and sorrow is universal. That is, the *aware* of a phase of an individual's limited experience transcends and becomes generalized and universalized. It can be said that the fusion of the feeling or sentiment of subject and object is one aspect of *mono no aware*.[228]

I think that Akiyama's definition suggests five very key ideas. These five elements are as follows: 1) beauty and happiness are fleeting; 2) sadness is an unavoidable and poignant emotion; 3) nature's cycle of life and death and changing seasons mirrors these realizations; 4) emotions are stirred by poetry and music; and 5) love is a dominant inspiration of *aware* or a sensitivity to things. In the Heian period, the

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[224] Miner, "The Heroine" 69.

[225] Ueda Makoto, "Motoori Norinaga", *The Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan* 1983 ed. 258.

[226] Norma Field, *The Splendor of Longing in The Tale of Genji* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987) 299.

[227] Arntzen, *The Kagerô Diary* 6.

[228] Akiyama Ken, "*Mono no aware,*" *Nihon koten bungaku daijiten*. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1983) 25.

melancholy emotions that beautiful nature scenes could invoke were often the inspiration for a wistful *tanka* or a melancholy song and that often alluded to a human emotion.

In light of Norinaga's description, perhaps another way to describe *mono no aware* is as a mood or essence that pervades the everyday, making each single experience and encounter part of a unique whole. In other words, *mono no aware* is a unifying emotional mood. For a Heian aristocrat it was the appreciation of the seemingly insignificant and fleeting things that gave life its vitality.

As mentioned above, love inspires *mono no aware*. According to Norinaga, *The Tale of Genji* expresses *mono no aware* through its descriptions of love affairs because "love, more than any other emotion, moves human hearts deeply, and it is therefore an especially rich source for the *mono no aware* experience."[229] In a love story, *mono no aware* is conveyed to the reader through the earnest words or unconscious actions of lovers yearning for their soul mates with the realization that their longings for love may never be fulfilled and that even if they are, it may be a fleeting thing. These expressions of *aware* are often subtle, indirect allusions to the actual emotion. In *The Tale of Genji* such subtleties abound. I concur with Norinaga's declaration that this novel is the ultimate expression of the *aware* of the Heian period and will therefore focus mainly upon the love stories within the *Genji* for the remainder of this discussion.

Expressions of *Aware*

In *The Tale of Genji,* the theme of longing dances in and out of the chapters. It begins with the yearning of Genji's father, the emperor, for his dead wife, Kiritsubo. Genji's illicit and constantly thwarted, love for his father's new wife, Fujitsubo, resonates throughout the tale.

> Constantly by his father's side, Genji spent little time at the Sanjo mansion of his bride [Aoi]. Fujitsubo was for him a vision of sublime beauty. If he could have someone like her – but in fact there was no one really like her. His bride too was beautiful, and she had had the advantage of every luxury; but he was not at all sure that they were meant for each other. The yearning in his young heart for the other lady was agony. … On evenings when there was music, he would play the flute to

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[229] Matsumoto Shigeru, *Motoori Norinaga* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press 1970) 47.

> her koto and so communicate something of his longing, and take some comfort from her voice, soft through the curtains.[230]

To a Heian audience, this ill-fated love was beautiful. Through the music of his flute, Genji tried to convey feelings for Fujitsubo that could not be voiced. His *aware* found expression in music, the only outlet available since he does not have access to her person.

In the romances of this period, this longing was often captured in the 31-syllable poetic form, *tanka*. The following is a touching farewell between Genji's grandson, Niou, and the beautiful Ukifune after a clandestine meeting.

> He could not possibly stay another day. "My soul," he whispered as he made ready to go, "does it linger on your sleeve?" Wishing he could be back in the city before daylight, his men were coughing nervously. She saw him to the door, and still he could not leave her.

Yo ni shirazu	What shall I do?
Madohubeki kana	These tears run on ahead
Saki ni tatsu	And plunge the road
Namida mo michi wo	I must go
Kakikurashi tsutsu	into utter darkness.

> She was touched.

Namida wo mo	So narrow my sleeves,
Hodo naki sode ni	they cannot take my tears
Seki kanete	How then shall
Ikani wakare wo	I make bold
Todo mubeki mizo	to keep you with me?

> A high wind roared through the trees and the dawn was heavy with frost. Even the touch of their robes, in the moment of parting, seemed cold. He was smitten afresh as he mounted his horse, and turned back to her; but his men were not prepared to wait longer. In a daze of longing, he at length set out.[231]

This simple poetic exchange is very moving. One can almost feel the frostiness in the air and the cold void forming in Niou's heart. It recalls Juliet's words in the balcony scene in Romeo and Juliet: "parting is such sweet sorrow."

An excerpt from Sei Shônagon's *Pillow Book* confirms that taking leave of one's lover was an event overflowing with 'sweet sorrow'.

> Presently he raises the lattice, and the two lovers stand together by the side door while he tells her how he dreads the coming day, which will keep them apart; then he slips away. The lady watches him go, and this moment of parting will remain among her most charming memories.[232]

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[230] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 19.

[231] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 985.

[232] Morris, *The Pillow Book* 49.

The following scene in "The Sacred Tree" chapter could have been the one Shônagon is describing. It is early morning and Genji is preparing to leave the quarters of Oborozukiyo before anyone becomes aware of their tryst.

> The lady was sad, and more beautiful for the sadness, as she recited a poem:

Kokoro kara	They say that it is dawn,
Katagata sode wo	that you grow weary.
Nurasukana	I weep,
Aku to wo shifuru	my sorrows
Koe ni tsuketemo	wrought by myself alone.

> He answered:

Nageki tsutsu	You tell me
Waga yo ha kakute	that these sorrows
Suguse to ya	must not cease?
Mune no akubeki	My sorrows, my love
Tokizo to mo naku	will neither have an ending.

> He made his stealthy way out. The moon was cold in the faint beginnings of dawn, softened by delicate tracings of mist.[233]

Once again, nature plays a role in the *aware* of the scene as the coldness of the moon mirrors the sorrow of lovers forced apart.

Moving good-byes are plentiful when Genji prepares to go to Suma and bids farewell first to Murasaki and then to Fujitsubo. All of the poems resonate with *mono no aware*.

> [Genji]

Mi ha kakute	I now must go into exile.
Sasura henu tomo	In this mirror
Kimi ga atari	an image of me
Saranu kagami no	will yet remain
Kage ha hanareji	beside you.

> Huddling against a pillar to hide her tears, she [Murasaki] replied as if to herself.

Wakaretemo	If when we part
Kagedanitomaru	an image yet remains,
Mononaraba	Then will I find
Kagami wo mitemo	some comfort
Nagusamete mashi	in my sorrow.

> Yes, she was unique-a new awareness of that fact stabbed at his heart.[234]

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[233] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 195.

His meeting with Fujistubo is just as heart-wrenching.

> He was almost too handsome as he at last succumbed to tears.
> "I am going to pay my respects at his majesty's grave. Do you have a message?"
>
> She was silent for a time, seeking to control herself.

Mishihanaku	The one whom I served
Aru ha kanashiki	is gone, the other must go
Yo no hate wo	Farewell to the world
Somukishika himo	was no farewell
Nakunakuzo furu	to its sorrows.

> But for both of them the sorrow was beyond words.
> He replied:

Wakareshi ni	The worst of grief
Kanashiki koto ha	for him should long have passed.
Tsukinishi wo	And now I must
Matazo kono yo no	leave the world
Usa ha masareru	where dwells the child.[235]

The poignancy of this good-bye is complicated by their emotions regarding the secret of their son whom everyone believes is the son of the emperor, Genji's father. The *Genji* is full of moving moments such as these.

As we have already seen in the examples quoted above, beautifully scripted letters and *tanka* were the main form of communication that lovers employed in the Heian period. In his preface to the *Kokinshû*, Ki no Tsurayuki states that it is poetry that "smoothes the relations of men and women"[236] and it is poetry that Genji repeatedly resorts to, to express his feelings to each of his loves. Sonja Arntzen sums up the reasons that *tanka* were used in communication during the Heian period.

> The choice of a brief form for the norm in poetry had other ramifications for the role of poetry in social interaction. A short form lends itself to being included in letters and facilitates impromptu composition. In conjunction with having fixed and easily understood conventions, the brevity of *waka* [*tanka*] helped keep poetry within everyone's reach. It may not be easy to write a superb [*tanka*], but it is not difficult to write one that merely follows the conventions and fits the form of 31-syllables.[237]

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[234] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 224.

[235] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 227.

[236] Rodd 35.

[237] Arntzen , *The Kagerô Diary* 37.

In other words, *tanka* were part of everyday communication in the Heian period and were often included in letters or whisperings of love because of their brevity and set themes. As we can see in the following examples, poetic conventions did not affect the passion that the short poems were used to express. Here is a bittersweet exchange of *tanka* between Genji and Fujitsubo when she is about to return to her family after the death of her husband, the emperor:

> "It is very late, I fear," he sent in to Fujitsubo. "I have been with the emperor."
>
> … Omyôbu[238] brought a poem from Fujitsubo:

Koko no he ni	Ninefold mists
Kiri ya hedatsuru	have risen and come between us.
Kumo no ue	I am left
No tsuki wo haruka	to imagine the moon
Ni omohiyaru kana	beyond the clouds.

> She was so near that he could feel her presence. His bitterness quite left him and he was in tears as he replied:

Tsuki kage ha	The autumn moon
Mishi yo no aki ni	is the autumn moon of old.
Ka haranu wo	How cruel the mists
He datsuru kiri no	that will not
Tsura kumo aru kana	let me see it.[239]

This situation illustrates that, even though the two characters are within speaking proximity with one another, etiquette and Fujitsubo's fear of discovery, prevent them from speaking directly to one another. This is because Fujitsubo and Genji are not supposed to have a relationship that allows them direct contact with each other. The use of poetry has more of an impact than mere words.

Even a fleeting murmur to oneself, expressing the *mono no aware* invoked by a loved one could find its way to the ears of the lover that is the inspiration. This is the result when a nun overhears Kaoru's *tanka* reflecting his wonder upon seeing the beautiful Ukifune for the first time.

Kaho tori no	I had heard the call
Koe mo kikishi ni	of that strange
Kayofu ya to	and lovely bird,
Shigemi wo wakete	And parted the grasses,
Kefu zo tazumuru	hoping to find its kin.

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[238] Omyôbu is Fujitsubo's lady-in-waiting and acts as go-between for the two lovers.

[239] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 203.

> It was a poem that he whispered as if to himself; but she [the nun] took it in to the lady.[240]

Kaoru's simple poem lays the groundwork for the complex love triangle that develops between Ukifune, himself and Niou. It is Kaoru's desire to keep Ukifune a secret that drives Niou to seek her out. Once he does, the two are undeniably attracted to one another and they spend forbidden time together. During one of these secret rendezvous Niou creates a *tanka* expressing the uncertainty of their relationship.

> "You must look at this and think of me when I am not able to visit you." He sketched a most handsome couple leaning towards each other. "If only we could be together always." He shed a tear.

Nagaki yo wo	The promise is made
Tanomete naho	for all the ages to come,
Kanashiki ha	But in these our lives
Tada ashita shiranu	we cannot be sure
Inochi narikeri	of the morrow.[241]

Perhaps an appropriate closing scene to end this discussion of the role of *tanka* in the *Genji* is the reflection of Prince Genji's grief when Fujitsubo passes away.

> Her funeral became the only business of the court, where grief was universal. The colours of late spring gave way to unrelieved gray and black. Gazing out at his Nijô garden, Genji thought of the festivities that spring a dozen years before. 'This year alone," he whispered. Not wanting to be seen weeping, he withdrew to the chapel, and there spent the day in tears. The trees at the crest of the ridge stood clear in the evening light. Wisps of cloud trailed below, a dull gray. It was a time when the want of striking colour had it's own beauty.

Irihi sasu	A rack of cloud
Mine ni tanabiku	across the light of evening
Usugumo ha	As if they too,
Mono omohi sode	these hills,
Ni iro ya magaheru	wore mourning weeds.

> There was no one to hear.[242]

Here Genji's poem exemplifies the intertwining of nature and emotion that is *mono no aware*. The landscape reflects his sorrow.

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[240] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 935.
[241] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 983.
[242] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 340.

Closure: East and West

Just as romances of the Heian period are tales of longing, the great romances of the west exhibit this universal quality of love as well. Nonetheless, in western romances closure seems to be essential to the story. Romeo anguishes over Juliet, Elizabeth subconsciously longs for Mr. Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*, *Anne of Green Gables* marries her childhood sweetheart, *The English Patient* obsesses after Katherine, and Rose and Jack struggle with their forbidden love aboard the *Titanic*. It is the way in which these desires are resolved that sets *The Tale of Genji* apart from these western romances. In *The Promised End*, Joseph M. Lenz speaks of romance closure as " a mirror that reflects the order that grounds a fiction in time and space and the artistic polish needed to maintain the reflection".[243] Hence, looking back, the death of Romeo and Juliet justifies their young love and adds a poignancy to a situation which, if ended any other way, would seem frivolous, given all the misunderstandings and the deaths that their affair caused. If the two deserted their ravaged families and married, we would be left with a tabloid article with no semblance of elegance. While the deaths of one or both of the lovers in *Romeo and Juliet*, *The English Patient* and *The Titanic* hardly qualify as "happy endings", they do offer the viewer/reader the same sense of closure as the weddings in *Pride and Prejudice* and *Anne of Green Gables*. In other words, closure, according Barbara Herrnstein Smith, offers a certain fulfillment.

> The occurrence of the terminal event is a confirmation of expectations that have been established by the structure of the sequence, and is usually distinctly gratifying. The sense of stable conclusiveness, finality, or "clinch" which we experience at that point is what is referred to as closure.[244]

By contrast, it could be said that Murasaki Shikibu cheated readers out of that final "clinch" because the last passage of *The Tale of Genji* leaves us dangling, waiting for an end that will never come as Kaoru ponders over his relationship with Ukifune.

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[243] Joseph M. Lenz, *The Promised End: Romance Closure in the Gawaiin-poet, Malory, Spenser, and Shakespeare* (New York: Peter Lang, 1986) 119.

[244] Barbara Herrnstein Smith, *Poetic Closure: A Study of How Poems End* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968) 2.

> It would seem that, as he examined several possibilities, a suspicion crossed his mind: the memory of how he himself had behaved in earlier days made him ask whether someone might be hiding her from the world.[245]

At the end of 54 chapters, the reader is left wondering what will happen next. Of course, this ending has caused endless debates as to whether or not the *Genji* was actually finished, but this is a question that may never be answered.[246] Shirane Haruo provides a reason for the ambiguous or anti-climactic endings of various love affairs in the *Genji*.

> In the *Genji* it is not the fulfillment or frustration of desire that becomes the focus of the narrative so much as the elegant and elaborate process of courtship: the poetry, the carefully chosen words, the calligraphy, the choice of paper, the evocative scent, the overheard music.[247]

In other words, it is the process of love that is important in *The Tale of Genji*. Kaoru's pursuit of Ukifune and the emotions that are stirred up as a result of his quest for ideal love takes precedence over the actual fulfillment of his desire. Prince Genji's lifelong infatuation with Fujitsubo adds a melancholy tension to the entire novel. The countless love letter exchanges and poetic expressions of love in the *Genji* held more appeal for a Heian reader than a happy ending. The longing and yearning that accompanies unrequited love is the ultimate expression of *mono no aware*. While some readers may feel that the *Genji* lacks the 'final clinch' that brings closure to a work, perhaps people who hold an appreciation of Japanese literature are not interested in being provided with that 'clinch' but are looking for the details that make a story captivating. This is an idea that will be further discussed below.

Whether finished or not, *The Tale of Genji* is not alone in its defiance of closure. Donald Keene quotes the famous poet Yoshida Kenko (1283-1350) to explain the unfinished quality of many Japanese literary works in an essay entitled "Japanese Aesthetics." Kenko asserts that "in everything, no matter what it may be, uniformity is undesirable. Leaving something incomplete makes it interesting, and gives one the feeling that there is room for growth."[248] These words shed light on a

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[245] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 1090.

[246] See especially Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince* 298-301.

[247] Shirane 30.

[248] Donald Keene, "Japanese Aesthetics," *Japanese Aesthetics and Culture: A Reader*, ed. Nancy G. Hume (Albany: State University of New York, 1995) 32.

Japanese sense of aesthetics that is very different from a western perspective. Just as Kaoru's final thoughts bewilder us, as we flip through the book in search of the next installment, Japanese literature in general often disappoints or bewilders western readers with its tendency not to follow the western literature's expected narrative sequence of beginning, middle and end[249]. This ambiguity is a long -standing characteristic of literature in Japan.

Even the *Cinderella* of Heian literature, *The Tale of the Lady Ochikubo*, while providing a happy or just ending for all of the characters, has an interesting twist that suggests that the ending is not as important as the beginning or middle of romance of the period. In the preface and appendix of the English version, the translators stress the novel's realism.

> …here for the first time we have a vivid and realistic chronicle of life […] The author keeps close to the human story he is chronicling. […] Each incident has its place in the mosaic of the plot; there is not a detail inconsistent with another, with the chronology or with the characters he is portraying.[250]

In a later discussion of the tale and its place in Heian literature, the translators contrast it with "fairy stories" such as *The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter* [*Taketori monogatari*] and "tales of wonder" such as *The Tale of the Hollow Tree* [*Utsubo monogatari*],[251] suggesting that *The Tale of the Lady Ochikubo*'s realistic depiction of life in Heian Japan sets it apart from these magical tales. [252] Indeed, magic does not play a role in the story, considering the supposedly accurate depiction of the society. However, the last line is somewhat puzzling.

> And she who was formerly called Akogi became Naishi no Suke [Vice-Directress of the bureau of General affairs of the Empress]. And it is said that the Naishi no Suke lived to the age of two hundred years.[253]

The idea of a person living for two hundred years is a very magical, unreal phenomenon. Why did the author choose to conclude a reportedly realistic depiction of life in the Heian period with such a magical notion? Perhaps the answer lies in the happy ending. That is to say, maybe the author was attempting to remind readers that happily-ever-after is unrealistic and that had Lady Ochikubo been a real person, all of her desires may not have been fulfilled and the wicked stepmother may have triumphed. This unreal ending may also support the idea that the ending of a Heian romance is less important than the preceding events.

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[249] Linda H. Chance, *Formless in Form: Kenko, Tsurezuregusa, and the Rhetoric of Japanese Fragmentary Prose* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997) 11.

[250] Whitehouse and Yanagisawa v.

[251] *The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter* and *The Tale of the Hollow Tree* are both early Heian *monogatari* [tales] containing elements of magic and of the supernatural. See Miner, Odagiri, and Morell, *The Princeton Companion to Classical Japanese Literature.*

[252] Whitehouse and Yanagisawa 265.

[253] Whitehouse and Yanagisawa 258. Emphasis mine.

In her book *The Splendor of Longing in the Tale of Genji,* Norma Field observes that the relationship between Genji and Murasaki has the makings of a fairy tale; "She is an orphan girl with nothing but herself to offer, he a handsome prince fallen on hard times. They are faithful to each other and are rewarded for their virtue."[254] Field notes that this 'fairy tale' is underpinned with suggestions that all is not perfect in paradise and cites Murasaki's ongoing jealousy of Genji's other women and her inability to have children as areas of conflict in their relationship.[255] Therefore, even in the most promising of relationships strengthened by true love, the elegant Murasaki's "fine-tuned sensitivity to the transience of things"[256] [Genji's romantic whims] invokes the melancholy strain of *aware*. Although readers are reassured of Genji's faithfulness to Murasaki even when she is gone, what is enthralling is the uncertain yet moving nature of their relationship rather than a desire to know how the relationship ends.

> When an old and continuous relationship comes to an end, the sorrow is not just for the relationship itself. The memory of the girl who was presently a woman and of all the years until suddenly at the end of your own life you are alone— this is too much to be born. It is the proliferation of memories, some of them serious and some of them amusing, that makes for the deepest sorrow.[257]

These are Prince Genji's words as he looks back upon his relationship with Murasaki almost one year after her death. Prince Genji indicates that memories invoke "the deepest sorrow." It is from that sorrow that the wistful beauty of *mono no aware* is born.

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[254] Field 175.

[255] Field 175-176.

[256] Arntzen, *The Kagerô Diary* 6.

[257] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 728.

The Refinement of Emotion

Let us reconsider Lenz's statement that romance closure is " a mirror that reflects the order that grounds a fiction in time and space and the artistic polish needed to maintain the reflection."[258] It may be that in Heian romances it is *mono no aware* that maintains the reflection because through the lens of *aware* even the harshest situations have a certain beauty. Moreover, I would argue that it is the reflection, and not the closure, that leaves an impression on readers. Royall Tyler, another translator of *The Tale of Genji*[259], comments that "Murasaki Shikibu turns her reader from uncontrolled excess of feeling, since excess lacks measure and grace, towards affective and especially visual beauty".[260] The passage Tyler cites to illustrate this refinement of emotion is a scene from "The Morning Glory" chapter in which Genji attempts to comfort his Murasaki, who is distraught by Genji's blatant pursuit of Lady Asagao. The conversation opens with Genji's seemingly heartless comment "You are looking curiously unlike yourself –I cannot imagine why?"[261]. The following is Tyler's account of his discovery.

> I had read these lines more than once before I translated them. [...]
> By then I was already fed up with Genji's behavior, and his "You are looking curiously unlike yourself" was to me the last straw. Imagine my surprise when, instead of indulging my indignation, the author turned the scene into a charming painting—("made one want to paint them both").[262]

Murasaki Shikibu skillfully prevents the reader from reacting to the blatant arrogance of Genji's comment by moving the focus from the harsh reality of Genji's infidelity to the poignant beauty of the scene. Thus, she succeeds in preserving the understated dignity of the novel, the expression of *mono no aware*.

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[258] Lenz 119.

[259] At this time [1999] Tyler's translation is a work in progress.

[260] Royall Tyler, "A Translator Looks at *The Tale of Genji*," *Nichibunken Newsletter* No. 28 (1997): 4.

[261] In Seidensticker's translation the passage begins "You are not looking well, [...] What can be the trouble?" *The Genji* 356.

[262] Tyler

Conclusion

Just as Prince Genji suggests that rather than the history books, it is the "romances that fill in the details,"[263] a survey of the details in romance literature of the period illustrates that romantic love in Heian Japan was a highly ritualized experience. The literature paints the heroes as vulnerable and the heroines as enduring and mysterious. In *The Tale of Genji,* while forbidden love affairs abound, they are never ugly because the depiction of the progression of love, no matter how unhappy, was never harsh and always poignant. Rather, Heian romantic love as depicted in the *Genji* is a series of moving love relationships that may be fleeting but are orchestrated with a grace and a refined passion that contribute to the poignancy of the situation. In Heian romances, the celebration of the process of love plays a dominant role and fulfillment fades into the background. The next chapter will reveal the shape that *mono no awáre* takes in the romances of present-day Japan.

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[263] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 437.

Chapter 5
Trendy *Mono no Aware*
Traces of the Heian in Heisei Romances

> What would we do if there were not these old romances to relieve our boredom? But amid all fabrication I must admit that I do find real emotions and plausible chains of events. We can be quite aware of the frivolity and the idleness and still be moved.[264]

Once again I rely upon Murasaki Shikibu's discussion of romances conveyed in the dialogue of Prince Genji. This statement reflects a timeless truth about romances, at least for Japanese fans. It is my contention that the essential element delivering the poignancy of love in *The Tale of Genji*, *mono no aware*, is still evident in trendy dramas. I also feel that in these dramas, just as in the *Genji*, the pursuit of love takes precedence over the fulfillment of desire. Given the dominance of the 'Hollywood romance'[265] (in which the emphasis is on the end of the love story) as a model for movie and television love stories the world over, one would expect trendy dramas of Japanese popular culture to emphasize closure as well, but many of them do not. The fact that prime time dramas exhibit a quality shared with a Heian romance suggests that it is not the promise of closure, but the melancholy essence of the love story that captures the attention of Japanese viewers. Taking examples from the trendy dramas *Tokyo Love Story, The Most Important Person, Long Vacation, and Love Generation* I will highlight traces of this Heian aesthetic quality shared between modern dramas and *The Tale of Genji.*

Heisei Heroes and Heroines

In all four of the trendy dramas the stars, both male and female, play characters seeking love. The heroes are vulnerable and feel things deeply. They experience constant conflict with their emotions. The heroines are beautiful, vital women. The actors are the most popular idols of the moment and perhaps could be called the 'shining' princes and lady Murasakis of Heisei Japan.[266]

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[264] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 437.

[265] The term 'Hollywood romance' refers to popular romances that have a happy ending. See especially Virginia Wright Wexman, *Creating the Couple: Love Marriage and Hollywood Performance* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993) 3-5.

[266] The idol Kimura Takuya plays the role of both Sena in *Long Vacation* and Teppei in *Love Generation*. In the last few years he has enjoyed great popularity. His fans even include housewives. He is a member of the wildly popular musical group SMAP. Minami is played by the talented

The four heroes Kanji (*Tokyo Love Story*), Kôhei (*The Most Important Person*), Sena *(Long Vacation*) and Teppei (*Love Generation*) are all good-looking young men who are searching for happiness in a grown-up world that is not always kind. Throughout the dramas they demonstrate awareness or sensitivity in moments of *aware* and a vulnerability when they are moved to tears. Kanji is a businessman confused about love. Kôhei is a university student bewildered about love and life, who after graduation cannot seem to settle on one job and ends up working for a courier company. Sena is a talented pianist who has settled for a job teaching piano rather than pursuing his dream to be a concert pianist, while Teppei is an artistic young man, forced to conform with the rules of the corporate world. All four of the men are educated, thoughtful men who cannot seem to find happiness in their work or their personal lives.

Likewise their female counterparts, Rika, Miwa, Minami, and Riko are on a personal journey looking for a kindred spirit to share tender moments with. Rika, a career woman with a knack for befriending people, is still getting over an affair with her married boss. Miwa, fresh out of college, is tall and beautiful and is just starting out in the corporate world. Minami, unwilling to sacrifice her personality in order to conform to the strict world of modeling, suddenly finds herself unemployed and without a fiancé at the age of 31. Riko is a country girl who moves to Tokyo to become an O.L.[267] because it seemed like Tokyo was a place full of possibilities.

The Stuff Trendy Dramas Are Made Of

As we have already seen, there are two types of trendy dramas that focus on love: ‘unhappy end’ (*sure chigai*) dramas and ‘happy end’ (*happi endo*) dramas. The four dramas discussed here all take place in the incredibly complex city that is Tokyo. In each type of drama, four similar elements exist; 1) boy meets girl, 2) boy and/or girl become(s) unwilling participant(s) in a romantic relationship, 3) boy and girl face a

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model/actor Yamaguchi Tomoko and Teppei's Riko is the singing actor Matsu Takako. Another fellow member of SMAP is the much adored Katori Shingo who plays *The Most Important Person*'s Kôhei. Miwa is the young model/actor Mizuki Arisa. In 1991, *Tokyo Love Story*'s Ôda Yuji was the heartthrob of the moment. Both he and Suzuki Honnami (Rika) are still widely admired. All six of these actors are very active in the Japanese entertainment world.

[267] O.L. stands for Office Lady, a secretarial position that usually includes serving coffee and tea to co- workers. Women usually leave this job when they get married.

series of obstacles within their relationship, and 4) boy and girl overcome obstacles. In *Tokyo Love Story* small-town-raised Kanji finds the worldly Rika's independence and frankness to be somewhat disconcerting qualities for a Japanese woman to possess. Likewise, Rika struggles with the fact that she has to compete with Kanji's childhood crush, the lady-like Satomi.

The stars of *The Most Important Person*, Miwa and Kôhei, are constantly forced together by friends and fate, although they are each desperately seeking to find happiness on their own. In *Long Vacation* struggling pianist Sena reluctantly allows the older, beautiful and aggressive Minami to become his roommate. As they both try and find out what really makes them happy they constantly look to each other for guidance and eventually love. The couple of the *Love Generation* seems to have a love- hate relationship as they struggle along with past girlfriends, broken engagements, family obligations and the rigid corporate world.

The point at which these two types of dramas differ is in the final episodes, which will be examined later in this chapter. However, it is the four aspects of the plots that the dramas share that are the most important. That is to say, it is the processes involved in the course of the love affair and the way that the characters express their love that resonates with the *aware* of the *Genji*.

Trendy *Mono no Aware*

In order to understand how *mono no aware* exists in trendy dramas, we must reconsider the five main points of the aesthetic ideal.

1. beauty and happiness are fleeting
2. sadness is an unavoidable and poignant emotion
3. nature's cycle of life and death and changing seasons mirrors these realizations
4. emotions are stirred by poetry and music
5. love is a dominant inspiration for *aware* or a sensitivity to things

How is it possible to capture and convey this classic and incredibly complex aesthetic that is so intricately bound to nature within the format of commercial television programs that take place in the sprawling concrete metropolis of Tokyo? In the book *Japanese Images of Nature: Cultural Perspectives* editors Asquith and Kalland make the observation that "the commonly held view that the Japanese have a 'love of nature' has been developed and repeated literally for centuries by both Japanese and observers of Japan."[268] They go on to say that natural imagery plays a role in advertising anything from tourism to computers. Proof of this also lies within the trendy dramas as the characters constantly comment upon the weather, or the beauty of a natural scene. Furthermore, the time frame of trendy dramas generally reflects the actual season that they are produced for. For example, *Long Vacation* aired starting in April of 1996 and ended in summer of the same year and the opening scene and final scene paralleled this time frame. Likewise, *The Most Important Person* started in April and ended in an April several years later. In dramas the seasons are represented with set symbols. In other words, cherry blossoms are equated with spring, fireworks with summer, *oden* [fishcake stew] with winter. This close affiliation with nature can be linked with the role that natural imagery played in the *tanka* of the Heian period: "whenever beer or sake commercials sell their product with the imagery of the four seasons, they are drawing on that traditional and communal sense of the valorization of nature that was informed by the poetic tradition."[269] This longstanding tradition in Japan of an assumed relationship with nature and the tendency to incorporate natural imagery into popular culture facilitates the transference of *mono no aware* in trendy dramas.

It is precisely this persistent focus on the natural within the confines of the city and the characters' constant acknowledgement of the relationship between emotion and nature and the changing seasons that permits dramas to be conveyors of *mono no aware*. This essence is captured in trendy dramas in the aesthetic experience conveyed through heart to heart conversations, usually about love, between the main characters. These encounters generally occur at night and often take place outdoors. Although the dialogue is central to the creation of *aware* in a scene, the combination of cinematography, lighting and music is used to enhance and smooth the rough edges of matters of the heart (refinement of emotion). The result is usually a touching revelation of a universal truth or emotion.

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[268] Arne Kalland and Pamela J. Asquith, "Japanese Perceptions of Nature: Ideals and Illusions," *Japanese Images of Nature: Cultural Perspectives*, eds. Asquith and Kalland. (Surrey: Curzon Press, 1997) 1-2.

[269] Sonja Arntzen, "Natural Imagery in Classical Japanese Poetry," Asquith and Kalland, 55.

Stars seem to be a major inspiration for *aware* in these situations. The following scene from *Tokyo Love Story* illustrates this.

> The newly acquainted Kanji and Rika are on their way home after getting together with Kanji's childhood friends. They stop in a park to take a look at the night view and Rika voices her envy of the camaraderie that Kanji and his friends share.
>
> Rika: I was envious when I saw you talking with Satomi and Mikami. Ever since I was little we moved a lot and when I was a teenager we lived overseas. I don't have childhood friends. And other good friends I have lost touch with. But, that doesn't mean that I feel lonely. For example, even when I am lonely, or can't sleep, I look up at the stars in the sky and I think that there must be other people in the world doing the same thing. Each person is alone, but the starry sky that we are all looking at is the same one.
>
> Rika gazes longingly at Kanji as he wistfully looks away.

The combination of the love theme playing in the background, the night sky, the lookout platform in a park full of trees set the scene for a poignant personal revelation. Even in moments of loneliness, Rika finds beauty in a connection with the natural world.

Five years later on a rooftop in Tokyo, on a late spring evening Minami and Sena are gazing up at that same starry sky:

> Sena has just been passed off as a neighbour by his roommate/friend Minami who is desperately trying to make a relationship with a prosperous photographer work out. Feeling dejected Sena heads to the rooftop to contemplate the stars. This is where the guilty Minami seeks to reconcile with him.
>
> Minami: {With a forced cheerfulness} I'm home!
> Sena: Welcome home. {Sarcastically} So, neighbour, did you receive the community newsletter that I left at your door?
> Minami: {Sheepishly}Yeah, what a great newsletter! {Casually} He's a good- looking guy, isn't he?
> Sena: He's that photographer Sugizaki, right?
> Minami: You got it!
> Sena: {Wistfully}Hey, in the sky…
> Minami: Sky? (they both gaze up at the sky)
> Sena: There are stars in the sky, right?
> Minami: Yes…
> Sena: The reason the stars twinkle in the sky is because they are Surrounded by darkness.
> Minami: Yeah, you can't see stars in the daytime
> Sena: The darkness exists to make the stars twinkle. Am I like the Darkness that helps the stars twinkle [always behind the scenes never the star]?
> Minami: {Smiling} You're so poetic.

This intimate disclosure reveals that, although Sena is hurt by Minami's actions, he can still share his innermost thoughts with her. His vulnerability prompts Minami to confide in him about the fact that she failed another job interview. A wistful piano version of the drama's title song "La, La, La Love Song"[270] plays as she talks of her uncertain future as unmarried woman of 31 with no job. Throughout this conversation Sena looks up at the sky and then back at Minami. He softly suggests that she should not worry, that she will find a job and then Minami finally says what she has been wanting to express since she got home but is worried that it will change the warm relationship that she and Sena share.

> Minami: {Abruptly} I was just asked to be Sugisaki's assistant.
> Sena: {Hesitating}That's good, isn't it?
> Minami: But I don't know anything about photography…What can I do? I Want to do something but I can't do anything…and I am 31!
> Sena: {Cheerfully} It's not too late. You'll find something new. I don't think there is anything wrong with photography. You used to have photographs taken of you [when you were a model] so you know something about it.
> Minami: Yeah…
> Sena: While you are doing that job, you'll probably find something better.
> Minami: You're right. Something is better than nothing.
> Sena: {Thoughtfully} I am the type of person that doesn't really like to go out much.
> Minami: You're lazy!?
> Sena: No! You know that isn't what I meant. I go out when I am invited but other than that I don't. So, when I do go out good things happen.
> Minami: What kind of good things?
> Sena: Nothing really important, but… seeing a beautiful sunset on the way home. Stuff like that I guess. It's better than just sleeping all day.
> Minami: {Smiles wistfully and looks understandingly [and fondly] at Sena}

Sena's recognition of simple, natural things such as a sunset parallel the idea that *mono no aware* is the appreciation of everyday things that make each day unique. He tries to cheer up Minami by reminding her not to forget the little things in life.

In TBS's 1997 'unhappy end' drama, *The Most Important Person* cherry blossoms are witnesses to a moment of *aware*.

> Miwa graduates from college and returns to Yokohama after a two-year absence, to live with her parents. Miwa finishes her relationship with her college boyfriend.

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[270] Kubota Toshinobu and Naomi Campbell, "La, La, La Love Song," CD Single, Sony Music Entertainment, 1996.

Finally, Miwa and Kôhei meet after the two-year separation and Kôhei seeks to resolve the issues between them. They are strolling under the cherry blossoms late one evening.

Kohei: (Breaks a twig of cherry blossoms off a branch and offers them to Miwa) Here, these are for you.
Miwa: They're for me? Isn't that destruction of park property?
Kohei: Oh, be quiet! Picking flowers isn't a crime!
Miwa: {Earnestly} They're beautiful.
Kohei: So, what happened to you after that?

There is a flashback to a younger Kôhei and Miwa in high school uniforms. The setting is similar to the one they are in now. Kôhei closes his eyes and suddenly Miwa kisses him and then rushes off. Kôhei is left looking shocked. Presumably, they haven't spoken since that event occurred.

Miwa: After what?
Kôhei: After what, you say? After THAT!
Miwa: Oh, not much. The usual…I got accepted to Tama College and went to Hachi Ôji….
Kôhei: Don't joke around! You selfishly left!
Miwa: Selfishly?
Kôhei: It's customary to say good bye if you're going somewhere… You hurt me! I resent that!
Miwa: Sorry…
Kôhei: I didn't know where you lived, I didn't know your phone number.
Miwa: {Coyly} You wanted to know?
Kôhei: That's not the point! You and I have been together ever since elementary school! That's… How can I put it? Well, I guess that we're childhood friends. Don't selfishly give up our friendship, O.K.?
Miwa: (nods) O.K.

With that tacit agreement, Miwa resolves what has been a source of conflict between them. Under a starry sky, beneath a cherry tree in full bloom, *aware* unfolds in the shape of a twig of cherry blossoms doomed to fade. In this scene, as in others not mentioned here, through his gentle scolding of Miwa, Kôhei unconsciously reveals his intense longing to be with her. There are numerous scenes in which Kôhei is lonely and calls Miwa only to get her mother's "Miwa's not here" reply. He also waits for Miwa at a previously agreed upon location, all night, hoping desperately that she will keep her promise. There is no doubt in the minds of the audience that our sensitive hero's heart is breaking with every denial of a chance to be with his true love, Miwa. Just as the title of Norma Field's book about *The Tale of Genji* reflects, it is "the splendor of longing"[271] that makes Kôhei's character so enduring.

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[271] Field (1987)

For Riko and Teppei in *Love Generation* a twilight stroll through the streets of Tokyo leads to an ocean side hunt for Riko's carelessly discarded engagement ring. Ironically, the ring serves as a bitter memory of a broken engagement. During this all night vigil, the two reveal their desires to find satisfaction in life and love. As dawn begins to break and faint strains of the love theme, "True True"[272], can be heard mingling with the sound of the ocean lapping up on the shore, Riko laments about lost love, "You don't fall in love very often, do you…?" As the sun rises, the two gaze woefully at the horizon and Teppei quietly reassures her that love will find her again. In chapter 3 we discussed other aspects of this drama that imply a connection between love and the concept of *mono no aware*. These are the slogan "true love never runs smooth" that can be seen on billboards here and there throughout the drama and the fragile crystal apple that keeps appearing conspicuously in scenes of particular importance to the plot. Both of these symbols also contribute to the overall atmosphere of sadness as an unavoidable and poignant emotion because we are reminded of the delicacy of love.

The scenes described above all combine natural imagery, lighting and music with revelations of personal fears or longings. The overall effect is one of subtle melancholy. The packaging is definitely different, but I suggest the *mono no aware* of the Heian period lives on in the television love stories of contemporary Japan. It is a unifying emotional mood that creates the poignancy.

Expressions of Trendy *Aware*

Genji and his contemporaries used the 31-syllable form of *tanka* as a means to express *aware*. Almost every chapter of the *Genji* has one *tanka* that serves as the emotional 'theme' in the chapter and usually gives the chapter its title. Perhaps the *tanka* of trendy dramas are their theme and love songs. Although social contexts have changed, love, as a human emotion, is a concept immune to the progression of time. Therefore, based on the central theme of love it could be argued that comparing ancient love poems with popular Japanese love songs is not too broad of a generalization. As Sonja Arntzen comments in the introduction of *The Kagerô Diary*, the blues genre of music shares similar characteristics with Heian tanka.

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[272] meo, "True True," *Love Generation Soundtrack*, EMI, 1997.

> The possible analogy with the blues opened up my own appreciation of the entire genre of Heian poetry, and this diary in particular. For fans at least, the blues produces joy; its particular alchemy is to turn pain into pleasure. Part of this transformation rests in the power of expression for expression's sake. Pain expressed is pain released. In terms of an art form, it is the artistry of the expression that contributes the pleasure.[273]

Similarly, parallels could be drawn between the lyrics of lost love and yearning in North American country music. Therefore, the fact that several genres of songs around the world share characteristics with *tanka* suggests that there is nothing unique about comparing this poetry to Japanese popular love songs.

However, if one looks beyond the physical poetic form (language and themes), to the role of *tanka* in tender exchanges in eleventh century romance *The Tale of Genji* and the role that love songs play in trendy dramas, perhaps a more specific link exists. Despite the obvious differences between trendy dramas and *The Tale of Genji*, like the Heian novel, the dramas of modern Japan are also love stories. Whether classic or contemporary, as Ellen Peel states in the article "Mediation and Mediators: Letters, Screens and Other Go-betweens in *The Tale of Genji*," "any love story raises issues of communicating with the other."[274] As we have already seen, in the romances of the Heian period, just as in the society which read these romances, *tanka* were used as a means of communication.

Moreover, in the literature of the period poetry is used in verbal exchanges between couples when perhaps mere words cannot convey the depth of the emotions being experienced. The following is the final farewell exchange between Prince Genji and Lady Rokujo, who have had a very turbulent relationship, after their last night of love.[275]

> Their feelings for each other, Genji's and the lady's, had run a whole range of sorrows and irritations, and no words could suffice for all they wanted to say to each other. The dawn sky was as if made for the occasion. Not wanting to go quite yet, Genji took her hand, very gently.

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[273] Arntzen, *The Kagerô Diary* 6.

[274] Ellen Peel, "Mediation and Mediators: Letters, Screens, and Other Go-Betweens in *The Tale of Genji*," *Approaches to Teaching Murasaki Shikibu's The Tale of Genji*, ed. Edward Kamens, (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1993) 109.

[275] Both Genji and Lady Rokujo believe that Rokujo's jealous spirit may have been responsible for the untimely deaths of Yugao and Genji's first wife Lady Aoi. At the time of this meeting, the lady is preparing to renounce herself to the world and become a nun.

Akatsuki no	A dawn farewell
Wakare wa itsumo	Is always drenched in dew,
Tsuyu keki wo	But sad is
Koha yo ni shiranu	The autumn sky
Aki no sora kana	As never before

> A cold wind was blowing and a pine cricket seemed to recognize the occasion. It was a serenade to which a happy lover would not have been deaf. Perhaps because their feelings were in such tumult, they found that the poems they might have exchanged were eluding them.
> At length the lady replied:

Ohokatano	An autumn farewell
Aki no wakare mo	needs nothing
Kanashiki ni	to make it sadder
Naku ne na sohe so	Enough of your songs
Nobe no matsu mushi	O crickets on the moors!

> It would not do to pour forth all the regrets again. He made his departure not wanting to be seen in the broadening daylight. His sleeves were made wet along the way with dew and with tears.[276]

At a time when even poetry was difficult to conjure up, the resulting *tanka* intensify the mood of confusion and sorrow. These emotions were so strong that had they been expressed in plain language they may have appeared harsh. Hence, the poetic form heightens the difficulty of the farewell. This reliance on poetry when overwhelmed by a situation is echoed throughout the romances of the *Genji*.

Likewise, the pop music of today can be said to serve a similar function in trendy dramas. In the article, "Listeners' Communicative Uses of Popular Music", James Lull suggests that music can be used as a medium of communication between two people.

> When a personally relevant or amusing lyric is transmitted in music it often becomes a focal point for listeners, sometimes overriding the physical and emotional attractiveness of the beat. The beat can be seen as a medium for delivering the lyric in a rhythmic way, sending it deep into the mind of the listener. Concentrating on the lyrics, the listener may use music in special ways. In situations where two listeners are paying attention to the lyrics, for instance, one of them can use the message to make a point to the other person. Singing along with the words "you're no good, you're no good, you're no good," for example, could be an effective message to someone within hearing distance. People remember key lyrics-those that have special meaning to the self or to someone else who shares the code.[277]

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[276] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 188.

[277] James Lull, "Listeners' Communicative Uses of Popular Music," *Popular Music and Communication* (New York: Sage Publications Ltd., 1987) 146.

Although somewhat more subtle and perhaps more romantic than the image of someone using the lyrics "you're no good" to convey a message to a second party, the theme songs of certain trendy dramas are often used within the story itself, as a medium by which the two protagonists indirectly communicate their feelings to one another. A prime example of this is the scene in *The Most Important Person* in which Miwa is in the bedroom of her childhood friend, Kôhei. At this point in the drama, the two have just recently been reunited after two years apart and although their mutual attraction is obvious to the audience, it may not be readily apparent to the two young people. The synopsis goes something like this:

> Miwa sits at the desk in Kôhei's room.
> Kôhei sits on the floor in front of the stereo.
> He puts a CD in the player and the song "Starting Over" by John Lennon[278] can be heard.
> Miwa: Hey, I've heard this song before.
> Kôhei: It's "Starting Over" by John Lennon.
> Miwa: You like John Lennon?
> Kôhei: I like this song.
>
> And he proceeds to translate the lyrics from English to Japanese
>
> Kôhei: Our life together is beautiful and special. But someday without knowing it, we will grow up. Although our feelings won't change, we will each go off on our own journeys. But we'll be together again. It is certain that we'll be together again.
> Miwa: Isn't that a contradiction?
> Kôhei: Where?
> Miwa: If their feelings for each other never change, why can't they be together? You must have made a mistake in the translation.
> Kôhei: That's not true! It's written in the lyrics.
>
> Miwa moves next to Kôhei to read the lyrics. As she realizes that she is close enough to Kôhei's face to kiss him, she says:
>
> Miwa: Yeah, it is a good song, isn't it?
>
> And quickly moves away from Kôhei.

Certainly, the song, which is also the drama's title song, reflects the course that Miwa and Kôhei's relationship is about to take as it progresses from a childhood friendship to that of awkward lovers and beyond. Whether or not Kôhei is conscious of the parallels that he is making between the song and 'real' life is ambiguous, but the exchange has a great impact on Miwa because she physically has to remove herself from the intimate position into which the discussion forced her.

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[278] John Lennon, "(Just Like) Starting Over," rec. 1980, *Imagine*, EMI 1988.

The ambiguity of Kôhei's intent as he plays the song is similar to that of Kaoru's poetry in *The Tale of Genji* chapter "The Lady at the Bridge"[279] as he talks to another elusive princess, Oigimi. In "The Operation of the Lyrical Mode in *The Tale of Genji*", Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen states that the ambiguity of Kaoru's poetry is a result of the "poetic persona" characters adopt when speaking through poetry. Hence, a character "is not necessarily aware of the full implications of his poem."[280] Perhaps this idea can also be applied to modern dramas in which the deep and often unconscious sentiments of masculine characters like Kôhei can subtly be conveyed through the popular medium of song while still preserving the character's dignity. According to Ramirez-Christensen "Kaoru can feel free to unmask his emotions, something he would not ordinarily do, under the guise of impersonal identity lent by the convention of the poetic exchange."[281]

Another example of this elegant preservation of dignity in a modern love story is the repeated use of music as a nonverbal medium between two potential lovers in the drama *Long Vacation.* The scene is between the two roommates, Minami and pianist Sena after they have had an argument. Minami has just stormed out of the apartment when Sena realizes that it is actually her birthday and naturally regrets his harsh words. When he calls out the window asking her to return and she does not, he turns to his last resort, his grand piano. As the tune "Happy Birthday" drifts out the open window into the street, Minami's resolve to leave falters, and she listens reflectively as the ditty turns into "Close to You – *Sena no Piano*[Sena's Piano]"[282], the love theme of the drama. By the end of Sena's serenade, Minami is back in the apartment and the unspoken apologies are implicitly understood.

At another crucial turning point in the story Sena reveals to Minami that if he wins the piano competition in which he is participating, he will be moving to Boston to study music. He does this over the phone, and it is obvious to the viewers that upon hearing this, Minami realizes how much she will miss him if he goes. Unspoken longing ebbs through the silences of their conversation. Finally, Minami asks Sena to let her hear "his piano" "just one last time". While he plays the love theme, she cries and the audience knows that they have deep feelings for each other. Just as the lyrical mode of *tanka* lends an aesthetic quality to Heian discourse, popular love songs add a subtle touch to sentimental exchanges in modern dramas.

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[279] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 775-798.

[280] Ramirez-Christensen 41-42.

[281] Ramirez-Christensen 41.

[282] Hinata Daisuke and Bud Rizzo, "Close to You – *Sena no Piano* [Sena's Piano]," *Long Vacation Soundtrack*, Cagnet, 1996.

Speaking once more of the aesthetic quality of both *tanka* and popular love songs, they can be said to add to the mood of the story in which they are included. There are 795 tanka in *The Tale of Genji*. Among the functions of the poetry in the tale, Amy Vladeck Heinrich says that the *tanka* "emphasize themes within the narrative progression, and clarify relationships."[283] Richard Okada highlights the narration of the heroine Murasaki's death in *The Tale of Genji* for this characteristic.[284] In this section the author's narrative is linked to the poetry in the section with the word 'dew'. The passage opens with the Murasaki Shikibu's words.

> The cool of autumn, so slow to come, was at last here. Though far from well, she [Murasaki] felt somewhat better. The winds were still gentle, but it was a time of heavy **dews** all the same. She would have liked the empress to stay with her just a little while longer but did not want to say so.
>
> Genji came in. "Isn't this splendid? I imagine Her Majesty's visit has done wonders for you."
>
> How pleased he was at what was in fact no improvement at all – and how desolate he soon must be!

[Murasaki]	*Oku to miru*	So briefly
	Hodo zo hakanaki	rests the **dew**.
	Tomosureba	upon the hagi
	Kaze ni midaruru	Even now it scatters
	Hagi no uha tsuyu	in the wind.

> It would have been a sad evening in any event, and the plight of the **dew** even now being shaken from the tossing branches, thought Genji, must seem to the sick lady very much like her own.

[Genji]	*Yaya mo seba*	In haste we make
	Kie wo arasohu	to leave this world of **dew**,
	Tsuyu no yo ni	may there be no time

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[283] Amy Vladeck Heinrich, "Blown in Furries: The Role of Poetry in 'Ukifune'," *Ukifune: Love in The Tale of Genji*, Pekarik, ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982) 153.

[284] Richard H. Okada, *Figures of Resistance: Language, Poetry, and Narrating in 'The Tale of Genji' and Other Mid-Heian Texts* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991) 109-110.

Okure sakidatsu	between the first
Hodo hezu mogana	and the last

> He did not try to hide his tears.
> And this was the empress's poem:

Akikaze ni	A world of dew
Shibashi tomaranu	before the autumn winds.
Tsuyu no yo wo	Not only theirs,
Tare ka kusaba no	these fragile
Uhe to nomi min	leaves of grass

> The empress took her hand and gazed into her face. Yes, it was indeed like the dew about to vanish away.[285]

And, with the vanishing of the dew, Murasaki passes away. The ephemeral image of dew ties the poetry to the narrative thus creating a poignant atmosphere that exemplifies the aesthetic quality of *mono no aware* that the *Genji* is said to embody.

In the same way, the title songs for television love stories are played throughout a drama to enhance the mood of the scene. Returning to the set of *The Most Important Person*, exchanges of tenderness or longing are accompanied by the theme song "Starting Over", thus signaling to the viewer the importance of the scene to the progression of Miwa and Kôhei's relationship. Likewise, the love themes in *Long Vacation, Love Generation,* and *Tokyo Love Story* are only heard at particularly emotional moments in the interactions between the main characters. Furthermore, these title/love songs join each weekly episode together to create a theme of continuity.

To emphasize the threads of continuity reflected in the parallels between *tanka* and popular music we can consider Ki no Tsurayuki's famous comments on Japanese poetry from the preface of the *Kokinshû.*

> Japanese poetry, with the human heart for a seed, grows into the countless leaves of words. Since for people in the world, there is such a lushness of things, in response to seeing things, hearing things, we are moved to express what we feel in our hearts. Hearing the warbler in the blossoms or the voice of frogs living in water, what living thing is not moved to song [poetry]. It is poetry that without using force moves heaven and earth, causes tender feelings in invisible spirits and demons, softens the relations between men and women, and consoles the fierce hearts of warriors.[286]

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[285] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 717.

[286] Arntzen, *The Kagerô Diary* 35. I prefer Arntzen's translation of this passage to Rodd's. See Rodd 35.

Although Tsurayuki is referring to the expressive power of poetry, the preceding discussion reveals that his view could also apply to the theme songs of trendy dramas. Popular Japanese (and American) love songs are the *tanka* of twentieth-century television love stories that reveal, convey, and preserve the emotion of *mono no aware*.

Closure: Past and Present

In trendy dramas, as in *The Tale of Genji*, there is evidence that the process of the love affair is more important than the ending. In *Love Generation*, Teppei and Riko share another kind of written exchange. One evening Riko plans a surprise for Teppei to let him know how she feels about him. She asks him to meet her at a very public square that is overshadowed by a huge electronic sign. Due to demands at work, Teppei arrives too late and a dejected Riko has already left. Somehow, when asking the park attendant if there is a message for him, he discovers that Riko had intended to post a very special message on the electronic sign for him to see at precisely at 8:00 PM. When Teppei realizes the seriousness of her message, he makes a plan and then calls Riko and begs her to meet him again and give him a second chance. She arrives, and much to her chagrin, at 10:00 PM her message runs across the board for all to see:

> Love for Sale
> Teppei, I Love You!![287]
> Your Riko

Teppei smiles to himself as he watches the board and then a message for Riko appears:

> Riko! I Love You Too!!
> Teppei

Just as Genji sends letters to his ladies, it seems that it is easier for the two to put their feelings into writing, than to say them. Although their love has been declared before the entire world, this scene comes across as very intimate because the couple are standing in the middle of the square and no other people are visible in their space. The soft streetlights and the playing of the theme song "Happy Ending" add to the intimacy. Although overwhelmed by Teppei's response, Riko is quick to tease him.

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[287] In Japanese the message has more of an impact because the word *suki* (love) is repeated 10 times across the board.

Eventually Teppei manages to embrace her in a kiss. This scene represents one of the best moments of tenderness between the two. What is interesting is that it comes in the middle of the drama and not at the end. In the final episode Teppei and Riko accidentally come upon one another in the same place that they initially met. They reconcile their differences in the same manner that they have throughout the drama, and then confirm that they want to grow old together just as it begins to snow and the credits run across the screen. After the credits are finished, the audience is given a glance at the 'wedding photos'. Thus, we are given the impression that they eventually get married. In comparison to the 'first kiss' scene, the last scene is rather anti-climactic.

In the other "happy end" drama *Long Vacation* Sena and Minami's first outwardly intimate exchange is equally as thrilling as the Teppei-Riko scene and takes place outside. The two have just walked half way across Tokyo after witnessing an emotional encounter between Minami's brother and Ryôko, Sena's first crush. Before heading into their apartment they unwind perched on a sound wall nearby. Imagine Sena and Minami, both wearing white shirts, perched above some leafy trees, under a cloudless summer night sky.

> Minami: The night air already feels like summer, doesn't it?
> Sena: Yeah…
> Minami: It makes me want to go to the beach.
> Sena: That it be nice, wouldn't it?
> Minami: (with a dreamy smile) You are such a generous person, Sena.
> Sena: Me?
> Minami: The sky is blue, the ocean is wide, you are generous.
> Sena: {Jokingly} I am not sure whether that is a compliment or not…
> Minami: If I ended up spending my life with someone like you, I'd always be happy.

They sit quietly together and then Sena playfully nudges Minami and casually suggests that they should kiss. She smiles and indicates her approval of the suggestion. As "La, La, La Love Song" breaks the silence and the streetlights take on the role of spotlights, they look fondly at one another and Minami closes her eyes and offers her lips to Sena. Sena bashfully gives her a quick peck on the cheek and they smile at each other. The next kiss is much more passionate. Afterwards they snuggle affectionately in the warm night air under the stars.

In my opinion, the cinematography and lighting effects used in this scene, combined with the perfectly timed music make this scene a high point of the drama. Of course, the last scene is exciting. Sena has just won the piano competition. The two confront each other on the same wall. As they shout out each other's names, they gradually move closer to each other until they are embracing. Sena asks Minami to move to Boston with him and she answers with a kiss. Once again, it is not until after the credits run that we are privileged with evidence that a wedding will take place as the drama ends where it began, this time with bride and groom in wedding dress and tux madly running through the streets of Boston chastising each other for sleeping in. While this happy ending is satisfying it does not have the same impact as the first kiss scene because it lacks the same poignancy and tenderness. Even in 'happy end' dramas such as *Love Generation* and *Long Vacation* there is evidence that viewers are more interested in the process of love rather than the actual outcome. This will be discussed in chapter six.

If the 'happy end' dramas close on a positive note, then the 'unhappy end' dramas end on a wistful one. *Tokyo Love Story* does just that. In the last episode, Rika realizes that she cannot compete with Kanji's long time love, Satomi, and announces that she is going to work in Los Angeles. Kanji is dismayed by this news and tries to talk her out of her decision. Suddenly, Rika disappears and Kanji instinctively knows that she has gone to his hometown, Ehime, to see what it is like to grow up in a small community (something that Rika never experienced). Eventually Kanji tracks Rika down and they spend a lovely day together visiting his childhood haunts. They agree to meet the next day at the train station and return to Tokyo together. However, at the appointed time Kanji is alone and all that is left of Rika is a handkerchief that has "Bye Bye" written on it in lipstick. When Kanji returns to Tokyo, Rika has already left for Los Angeles without a spoken good bye. One day, however, he does get a postcard from Ehime:

> Good Afternoon, Kanji! (or is it Good Evening?)
> I'm going to break up with you. I'm a little sad, but, I'm not only sad.
> Anyway, I'm happy that I shared time with you. Kanji, right now, I feel like
> Something is missing, but, I'll be ok.
> I'm lucky to have met you. I am not going to say good bye and I am not going to
> Make any promises, but we will meet again, won't we?
> Akana Rika PS How are you?

The two key sentences in this letter are "I'm happy that I shared time with you" and "I am lucky to have met you." Rika does not wallow in self-pity about what could have been. She celebrates what was. This is reinforced by the employment of flashbacks depicting moments in their relationship. Some of these moments are memorable, some happy, some sad, and some were just little everyday things that they did together.

Three years later the now married Kanji and Satomi run into Rika on the street. The always- accommodating Satomi encourages Kanji and Rika to go and catch up together. The two head up onto the rooftop and exchange formalities. Eventually, the conversation turns to their relationship. Rika's defense for not saying good bye to Kanji three years before echoes Riko's comment in *Love Generation* that falling in love is a rare occurrence.

> You don't fall in love that many times in your life. So if you meet the right person, it's easy to fall in love. That's why I cherish the fact that I loved you. That's the way I feel. Loving someone, being loved by someone, it will always live in my heart. You don't fall in love thinking about what will happen tomorrow. I can tell myself that I did well because I was the way I was and I am the way I am now.

Kanji presses Rika to tell him her address so that they can keep in touch, but she refuses saying that maybe they'll accidentally run in to each other again. As the credits roll, we see Rika standing alone on the rooftop looking out at the sunset. This ending is very touching but as Rika comments, it is not this moment that viewers should hold dear to their hearts, but the times that the two shared together.

Rika's thoughts on loving and being loved resemble Kôhei's observations in the last episode of *The Most Important Person*. He has married Hiroko and is talking to Miwa in the classroom that she teaches in. He takes Rika's thoughts on life one step further and says that even though nothing stays the same, and people follow their own paths in life, true love will keep people together forever.

Kôhei:	You know, since I've gotten married and been separated from you, there's something that I finally somehow understand. And that is, that you are the most precious person in my life.
Miwa:	Kôhei!
Kôhei:	But… that's why even if our lives go in different directions, I don't feel that sad. This may sound strange but, ever since that night, I've felt like you been with me constantly. How can I put it? It's like we're in the same school, but in different classrooms.

> When I think of it like that, I feel reassured. I guess that it's a fact that when you become an adult, you have to become a little more mature, and progress a little further everyday. It's really nerve wracking. To tell you the truth, I find it really hard. But then, sometimes, well… I guess, that I think of you. What can I say? You've known me so long that you know everything about me. So, somehow just knowing there is someone who will always think of me in the same way, I guess maybe you could say that it makes me feel better. You and I will always be together. Together forever.

Just as the audience is preparing for a touching final farewell that Kôhei's revelation has set up, Miwa trivializes the whole confession by turning it into a joke that Kôhei willingly contributes to:

> Miwa: {Jokingly} How can you say such a selfish thing? Suppose I find someone I really like, and fall madly in love with him, what then?…. Kôhei? Really? Who? Don't know him!
> Kôhei: You really are a big mouth! Have you forgotten the obligations you have to me?
> Miwa: Obligations? What obligations?
> Kôhei: There's lots! The time we were in charge of serving the school lunch and we were carrying the case of bread together? You tripped on the stairs, and dropped the bread? I'm the one that handed out that bread to everyone!
> Miwa: But the teacher found out about it and was really mad at me!
> Kôhei: Well, there are lots of other times!

Their bantering continues as they playfully chase each other out of the classroom and into the hall. At the end Kôhei has Miwa in a playful neck hold when they realize that four school children have witnessed their frolicking. Quickly they unhand each other and sheepishly say good bye to the students. The scene fades as the two friends/lovers (?) gaze fondly into each other's eyes.

In this final scene loose ends are tied up. The audience now knows that Miwa did not marry[288] after all and has returned to her old neighbourhood to teach. Most importantly, Kôhei has revealed that he has come to terms with his relationship with Miwa. But, has he really? As soon as Kôhei states that Miwa is the most important person in the world to him, questions begin to creep into the minds of the viewers; "Well then, why did he marry Hiroko?" or "How does he expect Miwa to feel, knowing that there is always the chance that maybe, someday, they will end up in each others arms again?" Finally, he concludes his soliloquy with the endless word, forever (*eien* = eternity, forever). How will Hiroko take the news that Kôhei's promise of " 'til death do us part" has to compete with a promise of "eternity" with Miwa? While the term "together forever" suggests closure, it is not final because Kôhei and Miwa did not marry each other, no one is dead, and Kôhei is married to someone else. The ambiguity of the course their relationship will take, leaves open the option that the Miwa – Kôhei saga is not over. Although the last line of the drama is *sayônara*, Miwa and Kôhei do not direct this good bye to one another and the drama fades out as they gaze fondly at each another. As strains of the theme song "(Just Like) Starting Over" by John Lennon waft through the spring air perhaps viewers will take the hint that in the season of new beginnings, this relationship that seems doomed to "start over" every two years, will continue in its cyclical fashion. This ambiguous ending not only seems to have a lack of closure, but it also seems to indicate that it is not the ending, but what has happened and what will happen in the love story that takes precedence over the final scene.

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[288] In an earlier scene, when a guilty Kôhei says that he has to marry 'the other woman' Hiroko, Miwa reassures him that she has already been proposed to and is planning to marry someone else.

Unlike *The Most Important Person, Love Generation* is a 'happy end' drama. As a follow-up to this drama, Fuji TV aired a special in 1998. The title of this special was *Love Generation 1998: Let's Start With a Happy Ending* [*happi endo de hajimeyô*].[289] The special is basically a condensed version of the drama, highlighting the important events. However, the summary ends before the 'happy wedding shots' and the scene shifts to the two actors, Matsu Takako (Riko) and Kimura Takuya (Teppei), who have presumably been watching the condensed version along with the audience. Both actors look slightly different than their characters, and convey quite a different personality, so the audience is aware of the difference.[290] The conversation that ensues is somewhat perplexing because the actors seem to switch in and out of character. They begin by commenting on how young they were in the show. They then agree that the kind of true love that was portrayed in the drama does not really exist. Kimura comments on how difficult that love was, but then remarks that only someone like Teppei would go to the lengths that he did to be with his true love.[291] After this they seem to revert back into their roles and discuss how their lives have changed since they (Teppei and Riko) last met. Suddenly, Teppei becomes Kimura again and slips quietly out of the room when Riko/Matsu is otherwise distracted. She smiles knowingly when she realizes that he is gone. In the final shot before the credits, a smiling Kimura glances back as he leaves the television studio.

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[289] *Love Generation 1998:Let's Start With a Happy Ending* [*happi endo de hajimeyô*], prod. Koiwai Hiroetsu, Fuji Television, Tokyo 1998.

[290] Matsu Takako has a perm and Kimura is sporting a goatee. Both Riko and Teppei are very clean cut characters.

This *Love Generation* special gives a very mixed message about the original happy ending and could be interpreted in two ways. The first is that the dialogue between the two characters/actors at the end of the show reflects the notions that true, or romantic love does not exist in real life (but it is a very enjoyable thing to watch). This is related to the fragile symbolism of the crystal apple and the slogan 'true love never runs smooth'. The second is that it creates possibilities for new stories to come after the happy ending. Hence, the title *Love Generation 98: Let's Start With a Happy Ending*. However, if that is the case, then the purpose of the actors' conversation is ambiguous. This program resonates with postmodern ideas of art and life becoming one. Whatever the reasoning behind the program, it serves to undermine the happy ending because it allows viewers to use their imagination as they consider other possible scenarios besides a marriage. This is reminiscent of the thirteenth- century poet, Kenko's assertion that "leaving something incomplete makes it interesting, and gives one the feeling that there is room for growth."[292]

At the end of both the 'happy ending' and 'the unhappy ending' dramas the dramatic device, the flashback is employed. During Sena's prize- winning piano performance in the last episode of *Long Vacation*, Minami listens with tears streaming down her face. Throughout the song, moments of friendship, love hate and passion that they have shared are recaptured in slow motion. Similarly, in *Love Generation*, the lonely Teppei, deserted by Riko because of various misunderstandings, wanders the streets of the Shibuya neighbourhood of Tokyo plagued by bittersweet memories of their time together. Whether it is the intention of the director is not certain, but these flashbacks serve to emphasize as of the stages the couple went through before they reached the inevitable happy ending. I feel that these flashbacks shift the emphasis from that happy ending and place it on the journey to that fulfillment.

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[291] Teppei ended up running up a Nagano ski hill at night, in a suit and dress shoes, to keep a promise to Riko, but he was late and she gave up on him and left before Teppei got there.

Flashback scenes are incorporated into 'unhappy end' dramas such as *Tokyo Love Story* and *The Most Important Person* as well. However, in both examples, the flashback occurs just before, during, or just after the couple breaks up. It seems to add to the poignancy of the break up, emphasizing what they endured and enjoyed while together. In other words, flashbacks are another aspect of trendy dramas that echo the *Genji's* tendency to focus upon the details of courtship and love rather than the fulfillment of desire.

Conclusion

The longing for love is an element universal to romances in Japan past and present. I rely once more upon Genji's opinion of romances, "sometimes a series of absurd and grotesque incidents which we know to be quite improbable holds our interest, and afterwards we must blush that it was so. Yet even then we can see what it was that held us".[293] As Genji observes, we are able to suspend disbelief in order to gratify our need to see love pursued. Even a classic like *The Tale of Genji* with its atmosphere of an exotic world keeps us turning the pages to discover the plight of its various intriguing lovers. In *Reading from the Heart*, Suzanne Juhasz speaks of a popular romantic conclusion; "The simplest romance novels end with a kiss. We have a phrase for that fade-out: 'happily ever after'".[294] Janice Radway lists the three most important ingredients of a romance of the western tradition in *Reading the Romance*.

1. happy ending
2. a slowly but consistently developing relationship between hero and heroine
3. some detail about the heroine and hero after they've gotten together[295]

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[292] Keene, "Japanese Aesthetics" 32.

[293] Seidensticker, *The Genji* 437.

[294] Suzanne Juhasz, *Reading From the Heart: Women, Literature, and the Search for True Love* (New York: Viking, 1994) 69.

[295] Janice A. Radway, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984) 67.

Unlike the western romances Radway is speaking of, in *The Tale of Genji* the emphasis is on point number two, "a slowly but consistently developing relationship between hero and heroine," and points one and three are inconsequential. It is the details that hold the reader's interest and not the promise of closure. As the above discussion reveals, it appears that trendy dramas also rely upon the details of love to keep their viewers interested in the love affair.

Furthermore, the dramas *Tokyo Love Story*, *The Most Important Person*, *Long Vacation*, and *Love Generation* all resonate with *mono no aware*. Through the wistful sensitivity of the twentieth-century characters the Heian aesthetic *mono no aware* is given life as a lyrical and unifying mood. Natural imagery and emotions are combined with cinematography and music to convey the subtle nuances that allude to true feelings of love and sadness. The audience is not only privileged with an intimate view of a tumultuous yet tender relationship, they are reminded of the simple beauty of a sunset or the ephemeral cherry blossom. It is my contention that it is the journey, not the destination that fascinates fans of Japanese love stories in Heian and present day Japan.

Chapter 6
Questionnaire Analysis

In the introduction to the book *The Worlds of Japanese Popular Culture* D.P. Martinez gave the following advice to anthropologists attempting to understand this subject; "this domain [popular culture] is never static; it is always changing, shifting and is often called upon to mean different things to different people. [...] ask a Japanese child, or a young man, or a young woman, what they think."[294] Rather than relying only upon my interpretation of trendy dramas, I chose to do just what Martinez proposes; thus my research is interdisciplinary, incorporating the disciplines of anthropology and literature. I was interested in discovering whether or not Japanese viewers are aware of the presence of *mono no aware* in trendy dramas that focus on love. I was also curious as to whether or not audiences in Japan appreciate these dramas for their conclusions or for their emphasis on the processes of love as I have argued.

As I indicated in chapter one, I will now discuss the results of Questionnaire Two[295]. In order to facilitate the discussion a recap of the age and gender of the participants and the goals of the questionnaire is necessary. Thirty-one questionnaires were completed. Seventeen respondents are female ranging in age from 21-32 and thirteen are males between the ages of 19 to over 30. The gender and age of one of the participants is unknown. The sample consists of Japanese people living in Japan and of Japanese exchange students residing in Alberta, Canada.

The questionnaire consisted of 28 questions covering the following four areas; 1) romantic elements of a love story; 2) associations with Heian literature; 3) *mono no aware*; and 4) closure. There were four main goals for this questionnaire.

1. To find out what elements of a love story are romantic for a Japanese audience
2. To find out whether or not any viewers see the aesthetic element *mono no aware* in trendy dramas
3. To find out what type of endings appeal to a Japanese audience.

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[294] Martinez 5.

[295] See Appendices A and B for Japanese and English versions of the questionnaire and Appendix C for the compilation of the translated results.

4. **To find out whether or not Japanese audiences associate 'happy end' (main characters marry) dramas or 'unhappy end' (main characters do not marry) dramas with any Heian classical literature**[296]

For the sake of consistency, I focused upon the four dramas that have been central to this thesis: *Tokyo Love Story, The Most Important Person, Long Vacation,* and *Love Generation* and firsthand knowledge of any one of these dramas was a prerequisite for participation. The numbers of participants who have watched each drama are as follows:

Drama	Female	Male	Unknown	Total
Tokyo Love Story	15	11	1	27
The Most Important Person	2	1	0	3
Long Vacation	14	11	1	26
Love Generation	10	7	0	17

Table 1: Number of viewers who have watched each drama

The numbers for the three Fuji Television productions *Tokyo Love Story, Long Vacation, and Love Generation* mirror the television stations' top drama ranking. I have included a breakdown of age and gender numbers to give an indication of the type of people who watch trendy dramas. Although I do notice trends affected by these two factors and see the potential for further research based on age and gender, I will not be considering these differences in this discussion. Furthermore, my analysis will be based mainly on qualitative rather than quantitative results because I am interested in the reasons for the participants' answers.

Although my questionnaire consists of 28 questions, I will not be analyzing the responses to all of the questions. This is because when I received the completed questionnaires, I realized that not all of the questions were relevant to my final thesis. For the purpose of this thesis, I will be focusing upon questions 1-6, 9-14, and 28 because they focus on the two areas that I am interested in; *mono no aware* and closure. While I do not believe that all the questions are applicable to my argument all of the responses provide us with interesting and valuable data.

Romantic Elements

When asked what type of ending was most satisfying in a love story, of the 31 respondents, a total of 26 people said that they preferred a happy ending. Eighteen people did not provide reasons for this answer, but 8 did. These explanations identified a happy ending as one in which the main couple gets together, gets married, and lives happily ever after. "The kind of story that ends with a happy ending. It is common in American movies,"[297] is the way one of the participants phrased his answer.

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[296] In the questionnaire the 'happy end' dramas are referred to as TYPE 1 and 'unhappy end' dramas

If a story does not have a definite ending, participants described their feelings in the following way: five chose the word disappointed. The reasons they gave were that they wanted a clear ending and that they wanted a happy ending. Six chose the word happy. Reasons given were that love stories do not have an ending, and that there is no reason to have a clear conclusion. Two participants indicated that it would be more interesting because viewers could interpret the ending in their own way. Only 1 participant chose 'let down' because "in the end I want a clear conclusion, no matter how it ends. If it is an ambiguous ending, somehow, my own self confidence becomes unclear."[298] Seven picked the word satisfied. Once again the freedom to imagine an ending was cited. " I am not particularly fussy about endings," was the response of one participant.[299] Finally, 13 indicated that they would be left feeling expectant or wanting more. The main reason given was that it would bother a person to have an ambiguous ending.

For most of the participants, the term romantic conjures up typical western images such as candlelight dinners, starry skies, flowers, chocolates, dating, Christmas, and Disneyland. Some of the exceptions were: "the kind of love in which moving encounters and unexpected things occur," "things that one can't see very often, things that make one's heart pound," and "when you hear a sad song tears come to your eyes, or when you hear an old song and remember past times." [300] These exceptions echo aspects of *mono no aware* because they show an appreciation for things that are fleeting, quite simple, and conjure up longing.

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are TYPE 2.

[297] Appendix C, question 1.

[298] Appendix C, question 2.

[299] Appendix C, question 2.

[300] Appendix C, question 5.

A 'happy ending' was almost unanimously defined as an ending in which the main couple marries. However, some responses included the thought that marriage does not always equal happiness. Responses such as, "I think that in Japan it is common for marriage to be a happy ending, but personally I think that they don't necessarily have to get married as long as they understand each other" or, "the best ending depends on the person as long as they have no regrets and are happy afterwards" stress this idea.[301] Likewise, an 'unhappy ending' was generally defined as an ending in which the main couple does not get together or one of them dies. Two interesting exceptions are "when the characters aren't true to their own feelings" and " when both of them are unhappy" because this could suggest that even if a couple got married, if they were not being true to themselves, it would be a tragedy.[302]

While the participants demonstrate a familiarity with the ideals of romantic love in the western tradition, awareness of the concepts of romantic love embodied in the Heian tradition were also evident. People were asked to identify examples of contemporary or classical literature that either the 'happy end' or 'unhappy end' dramas remind them of.[303] For 'happy end' dramas 28 out of 31 people did/could not give any response. However, of the three responses two were Heian works, the fairytale *The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter* and *The Tale of Genji*. For 'unhappy end' dramas 24 out of the 31 did/could not respond. Of the seven responses, 4 were Heian and 3 were modern Japanese literary works. Once again *The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter* got one vote and this time *The Tale of Genji* was chosen three times. The important factor that these responses revealed to me is that classical Japanese literature is not a familiar topic for many young people in Japan today and they may not be aware of any similarities simply because they do not know what they should be looking for. Thus, the fact that *The Tale of Genji* was mentioned four times out of the ten responses may be significant because it indicates that some people do see a connection.

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[301] Appendix C, question 3.
[302] Appendix C, question 4.
[303] Appendix C, question 14.

Trendy *Mono no Aware*

While working on this project, I worked with several Japanese people in their twenties. As we were working, I often found myself explaining what *mono no aware* was because the Japanese person had never heard of the term. This reminded me that Heian literature, like Chaucer and Shakespeare in the western tradition, is a specialized field of study. Perhaps the most revealing evidence of attitudes to romantic love was contained in responses to the final question, number 28. Here, people were given a list of terms and were then asked to indicate which of the terms best described the love expressed in each of the dramas. Of the eleven terms, three have long been associated with the Heian romance literature: *mono no aware*, *koishisa* [longing], and *hakanai* [fleeting]. While *mono no aware* is a literary term, *koishisa* and *hakanai* are commonly used words and their frequency in the responses may reflect this. Two other terms that reflect *mono no aware, setsunai* [bittersweet] and *tsurai* [painful], appear regularly in daily conversation and popular songs about love. *Itôshisa*[longing] is a modern word having a similar meaning to *koishisa.* I included the term, arranged marriage [*omiai*] as an opposite choice for *renai* [romantic love] so that participants would find words defining all aspects of love (i.e. the good, the bad). *Eikyû* [eternity, eternally], *shiawase* [happy], and *raburabu* [love love: cute term to describe love] are all contemporary terms used to describe romantic love. The following table illustrates the breakdown of responses by term and drama. Respondents were free to apply more than one term to each drama.

Term	*Tokyo Love Story* **TYPE 2**	*The Most Important Person* **TYPE 2**	*Long Vacation* **TYPE 1**	*Love Generation* **TYPE 1**	**Total**
Mono no aware	2	0	0	0	2
Koishisa	5	1	9	2	17
Hakanai	7	2	1	1	11
Setsunai	13	3	3	1	20
Tsurai	10	1	2	0	13
Itôshisa	6	1	9	4	20
Eikyû	0	0	5	2	7
Renai	10	0	0	4	14
Omiai	0	1	1	0	2
Shiawase	1	0	10	3	14
Raburabu	0	0	6	7	13

Table 2: Terms describing the love story in trendy dramas

I feel that although *mono no aware* was only chosen twice the terms *koishisa*, *hakanai*, *setsunai*, and *tsurai* all express aspects of the *mono no aware* of a love story, thus supporting my hypothesis that *mono no aware* still exists in trendy dramas. However, I do not think that Japanese viewers are conscious of this connection with the past simply because it is part of their aesthetic culture. Furthermore, despite the "happy ending" of the drama *Long Vacation*, respondents applied terms reflecting longing more than those reflecting happiness or love. Similarly with the 'happy end' drama *Love Generation*, while 14 responses were of the happiness, love attributions, 8 were of pain or longing.

Closure

Table 3 illustrates the results of the questions on what kind of ending appeals to viewers. Type 1 refers to 'happy end' dramas in which the main couple marries and Type 2 'unhappy end' refers to the case where the couple does not marry.

Question	**TYPE 1 Dramas**	**TYPE 2 Dramas**
Like	23	8
Dislike	2	9
Depends on Story	**4**	**9**
Romantic	19	10
Not Romantic	7	9
Depends on Story	**4**	**8**
Happy	27	6
Unhappy	0	10
Depends on Story	**3**	**13**

Table 3: Viewers' responses to questions about drama endings.[304]

It appears that the ideas that Japanese people between the ages of 19 and 30 have regarding romantic love reflect and probably have been influenced by the Hollywood romance in which couples marry and live happily ever after. However, I find it interesting that although the majority of people indicated that they thought TYPE 1 dramas had a happy ending, they also thought that TYPE 2 dramas represented a happy ending depending on the progression of the story. As one participant stated, "if it was a good experience, I think that it is a happy ending." [305]

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[304] See Appendix C, Questions 9-13.

It seems that in TYPE 2 dramas, it was the act of falling in love or experiencing love and the happiness of the couple in question that determined whether or not it was a happy ending rather than the marriage of the couple. Responses such as "even if they don't get married, falling in love is romantic" and "they may not end up happy, but they were happy along the way" reflect an appreciation of the process of a love story.[306] Thus, the reason TYPE 2 dramas appear to be romantic for viewers is similar to the notion of romantic love in Heian period [the splendor of longing] and also the appreciation of love as a process rather than the ultimate and only goal.[307] This could be connected to a heightened awareness of the beauty of ephemeral things or of the processes involved in love, *i.e. mono no aware*. It is also apparent that my equation of the terms 'happy end' and 'unhappy end' with the marriage or non-marriage of the main couple was an imposition of a 'Hollywood' view of romance. Nonetheless, the responses point to a judgement of a happy or unhappy story as lying in the process of the story rather than in the ending.

Conclusion

The results of the questionnaire confirm my suspicion that 'Hollywood romances' have greatly influenced young Japanese people. Nevertheless, a number of the responses reflect the appeal of the process of romantic love as opposed to a neat and tidy ending (closure) in dramas. I feel that these responses support my suggestion of an aesthetic connection between trendy dramas and Heian romances, particularly as portrayed in *The Tale of Genji*. I also think that this questionnaire illustrates that although the average Japanese person may not be conscious of the existence of *mono no aware* in contemporary television love stories, their responses reveal an appreciation of elements that *mono no aware* encompasses. In other words, fleeting love, bittersweet love, hardship, and longing.

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[305] Appendix C, question 12

[306] Appendix C, question 11

[307] This relates back to my discussion on page 87 regarding the appreciation for the events during the story over the actual ending.

Chapter 7
Conclusion:
Contemporary Culture and the *Aware* of it All

Despite being in the realm of fantasy, trendy dramas reflect everyday values as well. Regardless of their ending, or the idealistic portrayal of the main characters, in each drama cultural values that are important in Japan are evident. Specifically, in the 'unhappy end' drama *The Most Important Person*, Kôhei's decision to marry Hiroko rather than his longtime love Miwa portrays the act of placing duty or obligation to others [*giri*] before personal feelings [*ninjo*]. He feels an obligation towards Hiroko and her family because he has been living with her for some time. Even in the 'happy end' drama *Love Generation* Riko's father frowns upon her relationship with Teppei and urges her to return to her hometown and thus, a more traditional, and perhaps more acceptable lifestyle. Eventually, Riko gives in to her father's wishes when she thinks that life with Teppei will never be easy, returns to her family and agrees to meet some potential suitors. However, unlike Kôhei and Miwa's separation at the end of *The Most Important Person*, fantasy triumphs in *Love Generation* because Riko realizes that only Teppei will make her truly happy.

In *Tokyo Love Story*, rather than causing strife by fighting Satomi for Kanji's love, Rika seems to accept the situation and instead turns it into a valuable life experience. In the first episode of *Long Vacation*, the 31 year-old Minami causes her family to lose face when she is deserted by her fiancé on her wedding day. Throughout this drama, Minami's age and marital status and their effect upon her family add to her character's struggle and development as a member of Japanese society. In *Long Vacation* once again the domain of fantasy is triumphant because Minami defies the conventions of society and marries Sena, a younger man with an uncertain, but exciting future.

The dynamics of the inner [*uchi*] group and the outer [*soto*] group play a role in all four of the dramas. In *Tokyo Love Story* Rika is an outsider to Kanji's relationship with his school friends, Mikami and Satomi. In *The Most Important Person*, Kôhei and Miwa represent the inner group and their various suitors represent the outer group. In *Long Vacation*, Sena and Minami are thrust together by the actions of Minami's fiancé and as their friends are introduced to one another, a new inner group is created. Minami's marriage possibility, the photographer Sugisaki, is an outsider to this new inner group. In *Love Generation*, Teppei and Riko belong to several different groups (e.g. coworkers, schoolmates, family) and they are constantly struggling to maintain their own relationship within these other groups.

The actions of these characters reflects a sense of loyalty that is important in Japanese society. In these dramas, a carefully conducted marriage is promoted as a positive contribution to that society. Sacrificing personal feelings [*ninjo*] for familial obligations [*giri*] and the preservation of harmony [*wa*] within the group are cultural values that were greatly emphasized by Confucianism during the Tokugawa period. Trendy dramas may be considered to be reinforcing these 'traditional' values.

In a soap opera study Flitterman-Lewis states that "it is a well known fact that the desire for narrative closure–the resolution of a fiction's complications–is the mainstay of classical Hollywood cinema."[308] Ien Ang expands on this idea, "...romance novels [in the western tradition] always abruptly end at the moment that the two lovers have finally found each other, and thus never go beyond the point of no return: romantic fiction generally is exclusively about the titillating period before the wedding!"[309] When considered independently, this fact suggests that the romances of the West are no different than *The Tale of Genji* or Japanese trendy dramas in their emphasis on process. However, Ang then follows this with the statement that romance fans "can luxuriate in never having to enter the conflictual world that comes after the 'happy ending'."[310] In other words, the fulfillment of love as the ultimate closure contributes to the tradition of romantic love as an idealized emotional state because readers never have to deal with the inevitable realities of the relationship. Therefore, while both Japanese and western romances share a fascination with the details that lead up to an ending, a happy ending in the Japanese context is not always suitable as in the case of *Tokyo Love Story* and *The Most Important Person.*

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[308] Sandy Flitterman-Lewis, "All's Well that Doesn't End–Soap Opera and the Marriage Motif," *Camera Obscura* No. 16 (1988) 119.

[309] Ang, *Living Room Wars* 106.

[310] Ang, *Living Room Wars* 106.

In an article about Japanese morning dramas, Paul Harvey begins by saying that "contemplating a society through the window of its artistic productions is an activity fraught with peril: there will always be distortion, for art is necessarily a selective representation of society and its multiple ideologies."[311] He goes on to argue that although these morning dramas are no exception, for various reasons "this form of television drama is a revealing instance of the contradictory ideologies that go into making modern Japan."[312] In light of the previous discussion of trendy dramas and their relationship with the Heian novel *The Tale of Genji*, I feel that trendy dramas also reveal a contradictory aspect of modern Japan in the form of this dynamic concept of romantic love.

The British scholar Arthur Waley was the first person to translate Murasaki Shikibu's *The Tale of Genji* from classical Japanese into English, and thus is credited with introducing the world of the Shining One to a considerable portion of the world.

> With his refined sensibility and keen aesthetic understanding Waley was a true Heian gentleman—whence, no doubt, his particular sympathy with that magnificent period in Japanese culture. Literature, especially poetry, was central in his life, as it was for men and women of the Heian Court, not as an academic subject but as a vital, inspiring force.[313]

Despite his strong identification with Heian Japan, and numerous invitations from the Japanese government, Arthur Waley never did go to Japan. A colleague explained that it was precisely due to his strong connection to Heian Japan that he did not. He "felt so much at home [...] in Heian Japan that he could not face the modern ugliness amid which one has to seek out the many intact remains of beauty." [314] While the landscape of modern Japan, as is the case in most nations of the world today, is a myriad of concrete and neon, automobiles and industry, there are still vestiges of Genji's world. I feel traces of Heian Japan can also be found in trendy dramas.

The love stories revolving around Kanji and Rika, Kôhei and Miwa, Sena and Minami and Teppei and Riko are infused with *mono no aware*. Within these dramas *aware* is a unifying mood that combines love and longing with an appreciation of the everyday things that make life special. Rika will always value the love she once had with Kanji. No doubt she will take comfort in the fact that they are looking up at the same starry sky. The fleeting beauty of cherry blossoms will always remind Kôhei of the special bond he and Miwa share. Sena and Minami will cherish little things like sunsets and feel the significance of a wistful piano tune. Whether or not Teppei and Riko have found, or will ever find, true love is uncertain. However, in that uncertainty lies endless possibility.

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[311] Harvey, "Nonchan's Dream" 133.

[312] Harvey, "Nonchan's Dream" 133.

[313] Ivan Morris, "The Genius of Arthur Waley," *Madly Singing in the Mountains: An Appreciation and Anthology of Arthur Waley*, ed. Ivan Morris (New York: Walker and Company, 1970) 75.

Just as Prince Genji observed of romances at the beginning of this discussion, "amid all the fabrication" in both *The Tale of Genji* and trendy dramas, "we do find real emotions and plausible events." Although separated by centuries, the essence of Japanese romantic love, *mono no aware* lingers in each of these romances. Both Heian fiction and trendy dramas reflect the daily lives of people in the society they were meant to entertain and life does not always have a "happy ending". The love in these trendy dramas has a timeless quality that may be attributed to their classical heritage. It is not necessarily closure that appeals to a Japanese audience, but rather a long-cultivated sensitivity to the beauty of longing. Viewers prefer the excitement and suffering of the emotional roller coaster ride. At the end of that ride they might feel unsettled, but perhaps the thrill of the ride was worth it.

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[314] Morris, "The Genius of Arthur Waley" 80.

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Appendix A

Japanese Trendy Drama Questionnaire Two: English Version

I am in the East Asian Studies Graduate Programme at the University of Alberta, in Edmonton, Canada and I am conducting research for my thesis. My areas of interest are the love stories of the Heian period and Japanese trendy drama. I would appreciate it, if you could take the time to answer the following questionnaire. It will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Age: **Sex: M / F**

This questionnaire is about the following 4 trendy dramas. Please indicate with an 'X' which of the four you have watched. After answering Section 1 & 2, please only answer the questions pertaining to the dramas you have watched. Everyone should answer Section 7.

☐ ***Tokyo Love Story***
☐ ***Long Vacation***
☐ ***The Most Important Person***
☐ ***Love Generation***

Section 1:

1. In a love story, what type of ending satisfies you?

2. In the last episode of a love story, if the story does not have a definite ending (marriage, death), do you feel: (Choose one)

- disappointed
- I can imagine what the couple's future will be like so it is a good conclusion (happy)
- Although I thought that the couple was going to end up together, my expectations were wrong (let down)
- It wasn't the ending that I imagined but it was a good conclusion after all (satisfied)
- It was an ambiguous ending (expectant=wanting more)

Why?

3. Define the term 'Happy Ending'.

4. Define the term 'Unhappy Ending'.

5. When you hear the term romantic, what do you think of?
What words come to mind?

6. Is the element of longing an important part of a love story?

7. Define the following terms:
    - *koibito:*
    - *rabâ:*
    - *kareshi:*
    - *boifurendo:*
    - *kanojo:*
    - *gârufurendo:*

Section 2:

8. Which of the terms in question 7 most closely describe the following relationships between the characters? Why?

Tokyo Love Story: Kanji & Rika:
Kanji & Satomi:

Long Vacation: Sena & Minami:
Sena & Ryoko:

The Most Important Person: Kôhei & Miwa:
Kôhei & Hiroko:

Love Generation: Teppei & Riko:
Teppei & Sanae:

9. These 4 dramas represent two different types of trendy dramas. In TYPE 1 [happy end] the two protagonists meet, fall in love, face a series of obstacles, and ultimately marry each other. In TYPE 2 [unhappy end] the two protagonists meet, fall in love, face a series of obstacles, but do not marry each other.
   Does TYPE 1 appeal to you? Why or Why not?
   Does TYPE 2 appeal to you? Why or Why not?

10. Is TYPE 1 romantic? Why or why not?

11. Is TYPE 2 romantic? Why or Why not?

12. Is TYPE 1a happy or unhappy ending? Why or why not?

13. Is TYPE 2 a happy or unhappy ending? Why or why not?

14. Can you think of any examples in Japanese literature, contemporary or classical, that these two types of stories remind you of?
    Please list and explain why.

For Sections 3 –6 answer only for dramas you have watched.

Section 3: ***Tokyo Love Story***

15. Kanji and Rika do not marry each other at the end of the drama. How do you think they feel about this?

16. Rika always expresses the way she feels to everyone. How do you feel about this quality?

17. Why is this drama called '*Tokyo Love Story*'?

Section 4: ***Long Vacation***

18. In *Long Vacation* Minami gives up the chance to marry a successful photographer to be with Sena, a younger man whose future is uncertain. What do you think of this ending? Explain why.

19. At the end of the drama, Minami and Sena get married to each other. Do you think that they will live 'happily ever after'?

20. Why do you think the drama is called *Long Vacation?*

Section 5: ***The Most Important Person***

21. In the drama *The Most Important Person*, the main character, Kôhei, tells Miwa that ever since he married Hiroko, he has come to realize that Miwa is the most important person in his life and that he and Miwa would be together forever.
How does his statement make you feel? What does it make you think? Discuss this statement.

22. How do you think Miwa feels about the above statement?

23. Why doesn't Kôhei marry Miwa?

24. Throughout the drama Kôhei and Miwa seem to be longing for one another, but never admitting it to anyone. Is this type of longing romantic? Why or why not?

Section 6: ***Love Generation***

25. The slogan that runs throughout *Love Generation* is 'True Love Never Runs Smooth'.
What do you think this slogan means?
What does this statement mean to you?

26. Teppei and Riko get married to each other at the end of *Love Generation*. Do you think that they will live 'happily ever after'?

27. Why do you think this drama is called *Love Generation?*

Everyone should answer Section 7

Section 7:

28. Below is a list of terms:

❖ *mono no aware , tsurai, koishisa, itôshisa, renai, omiai, setsunai, shiawase, raburabu, hakanai, eikyû*

Which of the above terms closely describes the love story in the following dramas? Why?

Tokyo Love Story:

Long Vacation:

The Most Important Person:

Love Generation:

Thank you for your time!
Gretchen Phillips

Appendix B

Japanese Trendy Drama Questionnaire Two: Japanese Version

トレンディードラマ の アンケート

私は カナダ の エドモントン市にある アルバーター大学 の 大学院 で東アジア研究にたずさわっている学生です。私は 平安時代 の 文学 に えがかれた 恋愛 と 現代 の トレンディードラマ について 興味 が あり、論文 の ためにリサーチ を しています。

この アンケート は 約 ３０分 位 かかりますが、皆さんにご協力 を お願い したいと思います。又、勝手な お願い ですけれども、手書き の 際 は 漢字 に ふりがな を うって下さい。

性別：男　　女　　　　　　　　年齢：

この アンケート は 以下 の ４つ の トレンディー ドラマ について です。 もし あなた が その ドラマ を 見た こと が あれば、ドラマ名 の 前 に ある口 に　　を 記入 して下さい。又、セクション １・２・７ は 皆さん に 共通 の 質問 ですから、必ず 答えて下さい。その他 の 質問 について は あなた が 見た ドラマ について のみ 答えて下さい。

□　東京 ラブストーリー {1991:Oda Yuji, Suzuki Honami}
□　ロングバケーション {1996:Kimura Takuya, Yamaguchi Tomoko}
□　一番大切な人 {1997:Katori Shingo, Mizuki Arisa}
□　ラブジェネレーション {1997:Kimura Takuya, Matsu Takako}

セクション 1

１。ふうつラブストーリー で どのような 結末 に なると いいと思いますか。

２。最終回 で 二人 が 結ばれる かどうか はっきり しなかった 場合、あなた は どう 思いますか。

＊がっかりする。

＊二人 の 将来 が 自分達 で 想像 できたので、よい 結末 だ と 思う。

＊二人 が 結ばれると思ったのに、期待はずれだった。

＊自分 の 予想 通りではなかったけれどもけっきょくよい 結末だ。

＊ 結末 が あいまいだった と思う。

理由：

３。ラブストーリー の ハッピーエンド というと あなたは どの ような 結末 を考えますか。

４。ラブストーリー の ハッピーエンド でない 結末 は どんな 終わり方ですか。

５。ロマンチック という 言葉 を 聞いた時、どんな 事 を 想像 しますか。
又、どんな 言葉 が 浮かびますか。

6。ラブストーリーで二人が恋しく思うことは大切な要素だと思いますか。
（恋しさ：例えば、なかなか会えない彼（女）のことに思いをはせたり、相手の事を気づかって「好き」という事をなかなか表現できなかったりする事）

7。以下の言葉を定義して下さい。

恋人：

ラバー：

彼氏：

ボーイフレンド：

彼女：

ガールフレンド：

セクション２

8。7で定義された言葉について、それぞれのドラマの中のカップルはどの言葉の関係にあると思いますか。又、その理由についても書いて下さい。

東京ラブストーリー：完治とリカ：
完治とさとみ：

ロングバケーション：瀬名と南：
瀬名と涼子：

一番大切な人：紘平と美和：
紘平とひろ子：

ラブジェネレーション：哲平と理子：
哲平とさなえ：

9。この4つのドラマはタイプ1とタイプ2に分類できます。

タイプ1：主人公が出会い、恋に落ち、幾度かの試練に対面しながらも、最終的には結婚する。

タイプ2：主人公が出会い、恋に落ち、幾度かの試練に対面し、結局結婚しない。

あなたはタイプ1のドラマが好きですか。理由：

あなたはタイプ2のドラマが好きですか。理由：

10。タイプ1はロマンチックだと思いますか。　理由：

11。タイプ2はロマンチックだと思いますか。　理由：

１２。タイプ １ は ハッピーエンド だ と思いますか。それとも、ハッピーエンドでない と思いますか。 理由：

１３。タイプ２は ハッピーエンド だと思いますか。それとも、ハッピーエンドでないと 思いますか。 理由：

１４。日本 の 現代文学 又は 古典文学 の 中 で、この ２つのタイプ の 物語 にそれぞれ あてはまると 思われる 物語 が あれば、列記 して下さい。
タイプ １：
タイプ ２：

セクション 3－6 はあなたが見ていた ドラマ についてのみ 答えて下さい。

セクション 3：東京 ラブスートリー

１５。最終回で 完治 と リカ は 結婚 しませんでした。あなた は この 結末 について 完治 と リカ は どう 思った と 思いますか。

１６。リカ は いつも 皆 に 自分 が どう 思っているか を 表現 していた。
あなた は リカ の この 性格 について どう 思いますか。

１７。なぜ この ドラマの タイトル （題） が「東京 ラブストーリー」と つけられた と 思いますか。

セクション 4：ロングバケーション

１８。この ドラマ では 南は 瀬名（将来 の はっきり していない 若者） と 結婚 する ために成功した 写真家 と 結婚 する こと を あきらめました。
あなた は この 結末 について どう 思いますか。理由：

１９。あなた は 南と 瀬名 が その後 も 幸せ に 暮らしていくと 思いますか。理由：

２０。なぜ この ドラマの タイトル （題） が 「ロングバケーション」 とつけられた と 思いますか。

セクション 5：一番大切な人

２１。最終回 で紘平 は 美和 に
「（ひろ子 と） 結婚 して、お前 と 離れて、ようやく なんと なく 分かった ことが あるんだ。お前 は 俺 にとって やっぱり かけがえのない 存在 だって。俺 と お前 は ずっと 一緒なんだな。ずっと 永遠 に 一緒 なんだ。」

彼 の この セリフ を あなた は どう 思いますか。
彼 の 行動・セリフ について もし 何か 思い浮かぶ 事 が あれば、
書いて下さい。

２２。紘平 の セリフ を 聞いて、美和 は どう 思った と 思いますか。

２３。なぜ 紘平 は 美和と 結婚 しなかった と 思いますか。

２４。ドラマ の 全体 を 通して 紘平 と 美和 は お互い に いとおしく 思いながらも それ を 認め よう と しよ しませんでした。
このような タイプ の ”いとおしさ” は ロマンチック だと思いますか。
理由：

セクション６：ラブジェネレーション

２５。この ドラマ の スローガン は 「True Love Never Runs Smooth」 でした。
あなた は この スローガン が どういう 意味 だ と思いますか。

２６。哲平 と 理子 は 最終回 で 結婚 しました。
あなた は 二人 が その後 も 幸せ に 暮らしていく と思いますか。

２７。なぜ この ドラマの タイトル（題）が 「ラブジェネレーション」 とつけられた と思いますか。

＊＊＊＊＊＊＊セクション７の 質問 は 皆さん 答えて下さい。＊＊＊＊＊＊＊

セクション７

２８。　・もの の あわれ・つらい・恋しさ・いとおしさ・恋愛・お見合
・せつない・幸せ・ラブラブ・はかな・永久

上の 言葉 について 各々 の ドラマ は どの 言葉 の 関係 に ある と 思いますか。
又、その 理由 についても 書いて下さい。

東京 ラブストーリー：
ロングバケーション：
一番大切な人：
ラブジェネレーション：

ご協力どうも ありがとうございました。
グレチェン・フィリップス
Gretchen Phillips

Appendix C

Japanese Trendy Drama Questionnaire Two Results

Notes on the format:

- Unless otherwise indicated each response was given by one person

Total Participants: 31
Total Female: 17 Age: 21-32, Total Male: 13 Age: 19-30+, Unknown: 1 Age: (?)

☐ ***Tokyo Love Story*** Female: 15, Male: 11, Unknown: 1
☐ ***Long Vacation*** Female: 14, Male: 11, Unknown: 1
☐ ***The Most Important Person*** Female: 2, Male: 1, Unknown: 0
☐ ***Love Generation*** Female: 10, Male: 7, Unknown: 0

Section 1:

1. In a love story, what type of ending satisfies you?

Female:

- 13 - Happy ending
- The couple is joined for eternity, also marriage
- A realistic ending
- The main couple get together and live happily ever after
- Happy ending: It is good when at first it is a one- sided love, and even though it is painful, the couple get together in the end.

Male:

- 5 – happy ending
- I think it is good if the main characters pass each other (*surechigau*) (ie. Don't meet up). And I think that if one dies it is also good. (I like Romeo and Juliet)
- *raburabu* [love love]
- When a compatible couple gets together
- The couple separates and each person follows their own path in life. Thus, it is a happy ending.
- The kind of story that ends with a happy wedding. It is common in American movies.
- When the couple lives happily ever after
- 2 – no response

Unknown:

- The hero and the heroine fall in love, overcome many obstacles and get together

2. In the last episode of a love story, if the story does not have a definite ending (marriage, death), do you feel: Select one choice. Why?

Disappointed:

Female: 3

- Because I want a clear ending. Provided that the two main characters separate and each follow a new direction in life then it doesn't bother me.
- Because I want it to be a happy ending
- What happens to the couple after this? It would bother me and I would want to see what happens next.

Male: 2

- Because I want to see it through until the end
- Because I want them to get together in the end

I can imagine what the couples' future will be like so it is a good conclusion (happy)

Female: 2

- Because I think that love stories don't have an ending
- No reason given

Male: 3

- No reason given
- There is no reason to have a clear ending
- It may not end in a clear way, but it leaves a strong impression because you can imagine various things.

Unknown:

- When we say trendy dramas, viewers have the image that the main couple will get together. A conclusion in which the couple doesn't get together gives viewers a chance to interpret the ending in their own way.

Although I thought that the couple was going to end up together, my expectations were wrong (let down)

Female: 1

- In the end I want a clear conclusion, no matter how it ends. If it is an ambiguous ending, somehow, my own feeling of self-confidence becomes unclear.

It wasn't the ending that I imagined but it was a good conclusion after all (satisfied)

Female: 4

- Because if it is unclear, then there is the possibility that they may have gotten together. In that way, I can think positively.
- Because there may be a better ending than the one I imagine.
- 1 – no reason given
- If the drama ends how I imagined it to end, it would be boring

Male: 2

- No reason given
- Even if the ending isn't clear, it is ok if I can imagine what happens next.
- I am not particularly fussy about endings

Unknown:

- See unknown response above

It was an ambiguous ending (expectant = wanting more)

Female: 8

- 1 - No reason given
- It doesn't matter what story it is, if you don't know how it ends then you aren't satisfied
- Because I would want to know the conclusion and it would probably bother me. However, I may look forward to the possibility that a part 2 could be made.
- What happens to the couple after this? It would bother me and I would want to see what happens next.
- Even though I can imagine that it ends in a happy way, not knowing for sure would bother me
- I would think that it may have been better not to have watched it at all.
- Dramas are things that are different from reality so they should always have a happy ending. Since I expect that when I am watching it, an ambiguous ending would be unforgivable.
- It would simply bother me

Male: 5

- Because I want it to be clear as to whether they get together or not.
- It is a drama so I think it is better for it to have a clear conclusion.
- No reason given
- Personally I like happy endings so if it isn't a happy ending, it isn't interesting.
- It is satisfying when a drama has a clear conclusion and if it ends the way you imagined it makes you feel good.

3. What does the term 'happy ending' mean to you?

Female:

- The feeling that they will be together for the rest of their lives
- I think that it is a happy ending when the couple overcome many trials and end up together, smiling
- More than getting together, in their hearts they should be united

- The kind of ending when even though the couple breaks up once, they meet again and get married.
- When the man and woman have mutual feelings and start their life together
- The couple convey their feelings to each other, they start going out together, they get married
- 2 - When it ends happily for the couple. There are occasions when the couple separates happily. Usually the pattern of getting together is most common.
- When the feeling is mutual
- When the couple gets married and lives happily ever after or even if they don't get married, they still get along well and go together.
- When the couple continues to get along well and go together. Also, even if the couple chooses to go along their own separate and new paths that is good, too.
- Lovers or marriage (when their feelings become mutual)
- Marriage
- 4 - When the couple gets together.

Male:

- When it ends when they finally have sex, kiss or something.
- When the couple gets together and their rivals in love disappear. When enemies become friends and uneasiness ceases to exist.
- When the couple gets together
- No response
- When it ends and the actors have big smiles.
- When a couple who tries to get together is able to convey their feelings to one another.
- When two people who really like each other, but could never get along, get together.
- When the main couple get along well together
- An ending which enables you to predict the characters' futures and sets the stage for another episode. It can be said that it is also important to be able to predict the supporting characters' futures.
- The kind of ending in which the main characters can live with mutual understanding. They don't necessarily have to get married.
- When the main couple reaches a mutual understanding, and they start a new life.
- The best ending depends on the person. As long as they have no regrets and are happy afterwards.
- I think that in Japan it is common for marriage to be a happy ending, but personally I think that they don't necessarily have to get married as long as they understand each other and the woman becomes independent.

Unknown:

- When the hero and heroine get together.

4. What does the term 'Unhappy Ending' mean to you?

Female:

- When they go their own separate ways
- When they don't get together, and separate on a bad note
- Even though the love is mutual, they don't meet up.
- When one person marries a different person and the main couple doesn't meet again.
- When they don't get together
- When the man and woman cease to be interested in each other
- Although the couple really does like each other, they never seem to be able to get together and finally go their own separate ways.
- When an affair becomes serious and they end up with someone else
- When both of them are unhappy
- When one of the main characters marries a different person or dies.
- When the relationship continues to be one-sided/ when one character is dropped by the other.
- 2 - When the couple breaks up or someone dies.
- When the couple breaks up
- When the main characters end up with supporting characters

- When they can't be together (one goes abroad, etc.)
- Death

Male:

- Hmm…Death?
- When one of the characters dies. When they don't end up together.
- When they break up
- When one of the lovers marries (someone else)
- When it just ends without them [the couple] being able to say how they feel.
- When one of the lovers dies (there are exceptions)
- When they don't end up together
- When one of the main characters dies and they don't end up together
- When a deep rift that cannot be reconciled is created between lovers and they do not even part as friends
- 2 - When they don't reach a mutual understanding and part on a bad note
- When the characters aren't true to their own feelings (31)
- when two characters don' understand each other or forgive each other and end up with someone they don't like

Unknown:

- When the couple's love cools, and they move on to other loves. When the hero has another lover and the heroine kills herself.

5. When you hear the term romantic, what do you think of?
What words come to mind?

Female:

- A night stroll, but maybe even a short date in the afternoon can be romantic.
- 2 - Lovers spending time alone.
- Loving someone. *Suteki, eien* (eternity)
- The kind of love in which moving encounters and unexpected things occur
- A romantic person has a good imagination, a starry sky
- Being able to fantasize about many things when thinking about each other, euphoria
- On his girlfriend's birthday, a guy makes a reservation at a restaurant with a night view and gives her a present and flowers, Christmas
- It is difficult to explain. For example, when you hear a sad song tears come to your eyes, or when you hear an old song and remember past times. The word that comes to mind is 'music'.
- Things that one can't see very often, things that make one's heart pound, a starry sky
- Love (*rennai*)
- An incredibly happy atmosphere in which a separate world just for 2
- Starry sky, Christmas, etc.
- Night views, the flame of a candle, expensive, fancy restaurants, live piano performance
- Night views, Christmas, Disneyland
- Unrealistic
- watching the night sky, dreams
- Confessions of love on a sunset beach

Male:

- 1 candlestick on a table. A room lit by only the light of one candle
- A couple alone in their own world that other people can't see. Couple, kiss
- A couple looking at a night view
- I can't think of anything but, I think it is delightful.
- Things that don't happen in reality very often
- I can't say what is or isn't romantic
- Night views, starry skies, fireworks
- Only sweet, not painful, enjoyable things. To make your girlfriend happy
- A relaxing environment such as going to a restaurant, or coffee shop

- True love, I often think of a couple finding each other
- To spend time alone together that is so wonderful that words cannot express, night views
- Happy times
- A candle light date

Unknown:

- Looking at the city lights with your lover from the rooftop of a skyscraper in the city, *kirei*

6. Is the element of longing an important part of a love story?

Female:

- 8 - Yes
- 4 - I think it is very important
- 2 - Of course
- Yes. I think that the continued longing for someone is more important than loving someone.
- Of course, longing = love story
- Basically, I think it is important, but personally I hate whining.

Male:

- 9 - Yes
- I think it is very important. I think it is good when the viewers are anxious to know what happens next.
- No response
- Yes, I think that when you feel longing, it is natural to want to be together.
- Naturally

Unknown:

- Yes, one can dream about falling in love. No, a love story is a fictional drama and you just fall in love with the love in the drama.

7. Define the following terms:

❖ ***koibito:***

Female:

- 2 - the person one loves
- a special existence (when a couple live in their own world)
- when you are with each other, it feels good
- those who have a stable relationship, or people who want to get married
- 2 - the most important person
- a bittersweet relationship with someone who feels the same way
- a couple whose love is mutual
- someone one is going out with whom they have a special regard for. It is different from adoration, it is someone one would die for
- steady boyfriend/girlfriend
- the person one is seriously dating
- a couple who like each other
- 2 - person one is going out with
- when feelings become sweet, bittersweet
- when one mutually understands the other, they are an important person

Male:

- someone one likes
- a couple who has admitted that they like each other
- 2 - the person one is going out with
- 2 - No response
- a person who one genuinely loves
- real feeling
- someone one wants to take care of

- the most important person to one next to oneself
- someone you are going out with and think fondly apart
- when two people like each other
- a couple who are going out because they plan to get married

Unknown:
- no response

❖ ***rabâ:***

Female:
- someone one longs for
- secret lover
- Simply just someone you love, with no thought of the future
- a mistress
- 2 - don't use this word, can't define it
- someone you use to satisfy your own desires
- 2 - No response
- English version of *koibito*
- a mysterious affair
- 3 - can be a lover (*aijin*)
- ? [don't know]
- a secret lover that one wants to be with
- one time lover

Male:
- someone one loves [*koibito]*
- someone you have relations with even though you have a partner
- 4 - no response
- a relationship that has nothing to do with love
- *aijin*
- sexual relationship only
- 2 - the English version of *koibito*
- never used, impossible to define
- someone you simply like
- A couple who have physical relations without the intention of getting married. Liking each other is not an issue

Unknown:
- no response

❖ ***kareshi:***

Female:
- person one is going out with = more than a friend, not quite a *koibito*
- guy one gets along happily with
- 3 - the guy one is going out with
- just a boyfriend, a relationship without a view of marriage
- 2 - the same as *koibito*
- a person who one needs
- no response
- someone one is simply going out with. The feeling depends on the phase that the relationship is in.
- boyfriend
- the person one is going out with, I have the image of a younger person
- a special guy (one is going out with)
- when there are feelings of love and it is fun to be together
- someone with whom one shares interesting times, sad times, painful times, etc. with

Male:

- male
- a guy one is dating. Not limited to one person
- 4 - the guy one is going out with
- 4 - the guy one is going out with
- a *koibito* who is a male friend
- man with limits
- special member of the opposite sex
- a cool, nihilistic, nice guy
- no response
- includes one-sided love and concealed love

Unknown:

- no response

❖ ***boifurendo:***

Female:

- 7 -male friend
- a friend from school days
- 2 - a good male friend
- 2 - a person you have fun with
- a guy who is more than a friend, but not quite a *koibito*
- guy one is casually dating, but tentatively going out with
- same as *kareshi*
- one of many not- so -special guys one is dating

Male:

- man one loves truly (*ai*)
- male *koibito*
- no response
- 7 - male friend
- good friend
- a male friend, back up *kareshi*
- a relationship that friends know about. May or may not be sexual

Unknown:

- no response

❖ ***kanojo:***

Female:

- girl one is going out with=more than a friend, not quite a *koibito*
- person one can get along happily with
- 3 - the girl one is going out with
- just a girlfriend, a relationship without a view of marriage
- 2 - the same as *koibito*
- 2 - no response
- 2 - the female counterpart to *kareshi*
- girlfriend
- the person one is going out with, if the relationship lasts a long time, the person could be called *koibito*
- 2 - special girl one is going out with
- when there are feelings of love and it is fun to be together

Male:

- female
- girl one is dating. Not limited to one person
- 5 - girl one is dating

- a female friend who is a *koibito*
- limited woman ????
- special member of the opposite sex
- good friend
- no response
- ???

Unknown:

- no response

❖ ***gârufurendo:***

Female:

- 9-female friend
- 3 - close female friend
- no response
- more than a friend, not quite a *koibito*
- girl one is casually dating
- same as *kanojo*
- one of many not-so-special girls one is dating
- a friend you can say anything to

Male:

- woman one truly loves *(ai)*
- female *koibito*
- no response
- 7 - female friend
- good friend
- female friend, back up *kanojo*
- a girlfriend that friends know about

Unknown:

- no response

Section 2:

8. Which of the terms in question 7 most closely describe the following relationships between the characters? Why?

Tokyo Love Story

Kanji & Rika:

Female:

- 3 - *Kareshi & kanojo*
- *koibito*, because they needed each other
- *koibito* because they are honest with each other
- 3 - *koibito*
- *boifurendo & gârufurendo*
- 2 – no response
- *boifurendo & gârufurendo*, because it is a casual relationship
- *rabaa*, they were going out before, but they stopped being *koibito*
- 2-*Kareshi & kanojo*, because they like each other
- Kanji: *kanojo*, Rika: *boifurendo*
- *koibito*, because they are the most important person to each other

Male:

- 2 – no response
- *Koibito*: even though it was only temporary, they were attracted to each other
- *3 - koibito*
- *kareshi, kanojo*

- *koibito* because it had a bittersweet feeling
- *boifurendo & gârufurendo*
- *Koibito & gârufurendo*
- In the beginning of the show, Rika wanted to become Kanji's *koibito*. Kanji liked Rika but none of the words above describe the nature of the relationship.

Unknown:

- The way in which Rika regards Kanji is the viewers' idealistic view of love

Kanji & Satomi:

Female:

- *rabâ*
- First *rabâ*, then *koibito*: I don't like Satomi!!! She stole someone else's boyfriend. I feel sorry for Rika.
- *kareshi & kanojo* because they like each other but it is an awkward relationship
- *kanojo*
- 2 - *boifurendo & gârufurendo*
- 2 - *kareshi & kanojo* because they were actually going out at one time
- 2 – no response
- *koibito*
- *koibito*, because they both like each other
- They aren't really anything to each other, just classmates from high school. The way in which they constantly can't get together means that they cannot be called *koibito*.
- just friends
- Kanji: *gârufurendo*, Satomi: *koibito*
- *rabâ*, because Satomi doesn't really like Kanji.

Male:

- 3 – no response
- *koibito* because at the end they were both attracted to each other
- 3 - *boifurendo & gârufurendo*
- *kareshi & kanojo*: somehow it seemed to be their only choice
- *boifurendo & kanojo*
- *kareshi & gârufurendo*
- As far as Satomi is concerned, Kanji is a good catch. Kanji wants to become Satomi's *koibito* but he can't.

Unknown:

- No response

Long Vacation:

Sena & Minami:

Female:

- 2 - *kareshi & kanojo*
- More than *koibito* because they seemed genuinely happy together
- *kareshi & kanojo* because their relationship was equal
- 5 - *koibito*
- 2 – no response
- *koibito* because they love each other
- *boifurendo & gârufurendo* because they were like friends
- *koibito* because they gradually grew to like each other
- 2 - *kareshi & kanojo* because they like each other
- Until the last episode, they weren't really anything. In the last episode I guess that they were *koibito* because they got married.
- *kareshi & kanojo* because they needed each other

Male:

- *koibito* because they had sex

- 5 – no response
- 2 - *furendo* (friend)
- *kareshi & kanojo* because I can't believe that they really like each other with all their heart
- *koibito*
- *kareshi* & *Kanojo*
- *kareshi* & *koibito*
- *koibito* it was just at a different time than Ryoko and Sena

Unknown:

- No response

Sena & Ryoko:

Female:

- *rabâ, boifurendo*
- 5 - *Boifurendo & gârufurendo*
- *boifurendo & gâufurendo* because it didn't develop into anything more than friendship
- 2 - *Boifurendo & gârufurendo* because the feeling wasn't mutual
- 4 – no response
- *kareshi* & *kanojo* because they went out with one another (but only when they were going out)
- *boifurendo & gârufurendo*, Sena liked Ryoko but Ryoko didn't share the same feelings and later Sena and Minami became *koibito*
- Not really anything, just friends. I think that the fact that they thought that they liked each other was just a misunderstanding.
- Nothing special
- Sena: *kanojo*, Ryoko: *boifurendo*
- *gârufurendo*?

Male:

- 6 – no response
- 2 – *furendo* (friend)
- 4 - *boifurendo & gârufurendo*
- *koibito* it was just at a different time than Minami and Sena

Unknown:

- no response

The Most Important Person

Kôhei & Miwa:

Female:

- 16 – no response
- *boifurendo & gârufurendo*

Male:

- 12 – no response
- Childhood friends, none of the terms work

Unknown:

- No response

Kôhei & Hiroko:

Female:

- All no response

Male:

- 12 – no response
- at first they were *boifurendo* and *gârufurendo* and then they became *koibito* but them they broke up.

Love Generation:

Teppei & Riko:

Female:

- *kareshi & koibito*

- *koibito*: the obstinate Riko and Teppei really suit each other
- 2 - *koibito* because they both needed each other
- 7 – no response
- *koibito*
- 2 - *kareshi & kanojo*
- *koibito* because they both loved each other
- 2-*kareshi* & *kanojo* because they like each other

Male:

- 7 – no response
- *kanojo*
- 3 - *koibito*
- *kareshi* & *kanojo*
- in the end they were *koibito*

Teppei & Sanae:

Female:

- *rabâ*
- *rabâ*, even though Sanae had a fiancé she tempted Teppei
- *kareshi & kanojo* they are attracted to each other
- 8 - no response
- *boifurendo & gârufurendo*
- *koibito*
- *boifurendo & gârufurendo*: they don't love each other
- They used to be classmates. They liked each other a long time ago but now they each have a *koibito* and it is not possible for them to like each other again. Their thinking that the like each other is just a memory of the past.
- They are just friends. They are merely nostalgic for the attraction that they once felt for each other
- *boifurendo & gârufurendo*: they weren't meant to get together, it was just a thing of the past

Male:

- 1 – no response
- ex- *kanojo*
- 2-*boifurendoi* & *kanojo*
- *boifurendo* & *gârufurendo*
- Ex-*koibito*

9. **These 4 dramas represent two different types of trendy dramas. In TYPE 1 [happy end] the two protagonists meet, fall in love, face a series of obstacles, and ultimately marry each other. In TYPE 2 [unhappy end] the two protagonists meet, fall in love, face a series of obstacles, but do not marry each other.**
   Does TYPE 1 appeal to you? Why or Why not?

Female:

- Yes, because I am envious of couples who think of each other no matter what happens and finally get together
- Yes, because it is the foundation of love dramas.
- Yes, because it is a happy ending
- Yes, the more hardship couples experience, the more happiness they can achieve at the end! (So I was impressed with such stories)
- Yes, because I want the main characters to be happy
- No, because it is not realistic. I don't think that marriage is the ultimate goal.
- Yes, the more obstacles they overcome, the deeper the relationship will be
- Yes, as for dramas, just watching happy endings is enjoyable
- Yes, because the main characters become happy
- Yes, I am delighted when it is a happy ending
- Yes, because I like happy endings

- Yes, because I think that among drama happy endings, marriage is good.
- 3-Yes, when I am watching I can relax
- I don't really like or dislike it. If it is a happy ending it is ok if it doesn't end with a wedding
- Yes, because while they faced many obstacles, they were still able to get married

Male:

- No response
- No, because if they get married, there is nothing new to look forward to after that
- Yes because it ends happily
- Yes, because I feel relieved
- If marriage is the ultimate goal, then Type 1 may be a happy ending, however, in *Tokyo Love Story* Kanji and Rika didn't get married but I think that even falling in love once is a connection.
- Yes, because I like happy endings
- Yes, because I don't like sad endings
- Comparatively speaking, yes because I like *Long Vacation*. Naturally they will experience ups and downs in their relationship, and I hope that is the way it will be.
- No comment, the answer depends on the way in which the ending was reached.
- I don't really care about marriage, but I think that it is more wonderful if a couple who has overcome many obstacles can succeed together.
- If I put my self in the position of the main characters, it depends on the situation.
- Yes, I can experience a love relationship that in had in the past again. In reality my relationship didn't have a happy ending, but I can experience a happy ending now.

Unknown:

- Spending one's whole life with one partner is separate from reality, it is the viewers' ideal

Does TYPE 2 appeal to you? Why or Why not?

Female:

- Yes, even though they part, if they each can go their own way, I think it is ok.
- It depends on the reason that they didn't get married but if the couple doesn't regret their encounter after they have separated, then I think it is ok.
- No, because they break up after all.
- It is acceptable. It depends on the process, i.e. if they broke up with reasonable reasons (say, thinking about their careers, etc.) the result is acceptable, but otherwise falling in love with each other and ending up with a negative result makes me disappointed (no marriage).
- No
- Yes, because it is interesting to imagine what their lives will be like
- Not really because break up stories are sad.
- I don't dislike them. It may be a bittersweet feeling but if the main characters are happy, then it is ok if they separate.
- Yes, because the main characters grow with the experience
- Yes, even though I realize that it will be sad and I will cry, I can sympathize with the characters.
- No, because when I watch dramas I want to cheer for one of the characters. Since I have it in my mind that the couple will get together, I am really disappointed in the end if they don't.
- No, because I want them to get married
- Yes, because life isn't just marriage, one can be inspired by work, etc.
- I don't really like it, because I long to have a family.
- I don't really like or dislike it. If it is a happy ending it ok if it doesn't end with a wedding
- Yes, depending on the situation, sometimes it is for the best
- No, because they don't get married after all

Male:

- Yes, because young people don't understand marriage's depth
- Yes, you can anticipate what comes after marriage, etc.
- 3– no response

- If getting married is the final goal, then type 1 may be a happy ending. However, in *Tokyo Love Story* Kanji and Rika may not have gotten married but, as far as one love goes, they did get together.
- No because it is not a happy ending
- No, because I want the couple to be happy
- I really like it. Even from personal experience I realize that the growth process is an important part of life. We look forward to the next episode.
- No comment, the answer depends on the way in which the ending was reached.
- I don't dislike it. Even if it doesn't lead to marriage, or doesn't go well, I like the different phases of a relationship.
- If I put my self in the position of the main characters, it depends on the situation.
- Yes, it reminds me of a past love relationship. I can experience the bitter sweetness of a failed love affair again.

Unknown:

- No response

10. Is TYPE 1 romantic? Why or why not?

Female:

- Yes, it must be nice to be able to like someone that much!
- No, it is a conventional result
- Yes, because I can imagine a wonderful future
- Yes, because such stories are somewhat unrealistic (not happen usually) but that what I am looking forward to experiencing in the future!
- No, it depends on the content of the story.
- No because it is such a common, fixed idea it is not romantic
- No, I don't think it is romantic because it is suspenseful to watch only obstacles
- Yes, if it is a happy ending, it is almost 'all's well that ends well'. At any rate if the process is consistent from beginning to end, one can see the beauty in it.
- Yes, because it is romantic to fall in love
- 2 - Yes, I think that a happy ending after overcoming many obstacles is very romantic.
- Yes, just watching others fall in love often even I feel the excitement.
- Yes, after all I think women long for marriage.
- Yes
- Not really
- No because ultimately it is stable (stagnant?)
- Yes, because their love is genuine

Male:

- Yes, after a lot of things happen, they finally get together
- No, because true love and marriage are different things. In a drama one expects true love more than marriage.
- no response
- 2 - Yes
- I think that it is passionate, so it is good.
- In marriage I don't think that a romantic happy ending is the issue. Marriage is just one part of life.
- No because it involves hardship
- Yes because that is what everyone dreams of
- No comment. It depends on the way the ending was reached.
- Yes, they could experience many things and were able to spend precious time together
- There are times when I do
- Yes, the heart that feels, changes and hurts are all dear (*kawaii)*.

Unknown:

- Viewers long for true love's bittersweet yearning

11. Is TYPE 2 romantic? Why or Why not?

Female:

- I don't know
- It depends on the story, if they don't regret the encounter, then I think it is romantic.
- Yes, no matter what happens in the end, they fell in love.
- Yes, because even though such stories end up with sad conclusions, they have some happenings. In this sense, those stories are romantic.
- No, it depends on the content of the story
- Yes, I think that it is [illegible] able to choose various endings. It is more romantic if there is no uneasiness
- No, because when you watch it you become sad.
- In the end, if the main characters' happiness comes before marriage, that in itself is romantic.
- Yes, even if they don't get married, falling in love is romantic
- Yes, love stories are romantic no matter how they end.
- No
- Yes, because although they didn't get married after all, they overcame many obstacles
- No, it is too close to reality
- Not really
- No, the meaning is different than romantic.
- No, it is painfully sad.

Male:

- Hmm?
- No, because true love and marriage are different things. In a drama one expects true love more than marriage.
- 2 - No response
- Yes, because it is an unconventional ending.
- In marriage I don't think that a romantic happy ending is the issue. Marriage is just one part of life.
- No
- No, because they can never become completely happy. Painful things will happen again.
- Yes, you can learn from it
- No comment. It depends on the way in which the conclusion was reached.
- I think that it has its romantic aspects. They may not end up happy, but they may have been happy along the way.
- Sometimes I think so.
- Yes

Unknown:

- No response

12. Is TYPE 1a happy or unhappy ending? Why or why not?

Female:

- 2 - Happy ending
- 4 - Happy ending because the couple is mutually happy
- Marriage = happy ending
- Yes, type 1 stories are happy end stories because couple achieved what they wanted to be. (i.e. marriage, maybe…)
- Happy ending because the viewers are reassured (*anshin*)
- All's well that ends well
- Happy ending if it is a happy marriage
- If the couple is genuinely happy, I think it is a happy ending.
- Happy ending because they were finally able to convey their feelings
- Happy ending because in the drama wedding scenes it appears that the couple will be happy.

- Marriage doesn't necessarily equal a happy ending.
- Happy ending because they overcome many obstacles
- Happy ending because they finally get married

Male:

- 3 - Happy ending, because the main characters get together
- Happy ending; because whether they marry or not, they are happy
- 3 - Happy ending
- Happy ending because they got married
- No response
- Happy ending, because everything is settled and no one is hurt.
- No comment. The answer depends on how the conclusion was reached.
- Happy ending because although a lot of things happened, they got married and will be happier in the future.
- There are times when I think so and times when I don't.

Unknown:

- Yes

13. Is TYPE 2 a happy or unhappy ending? Why or why not?

Female:

- Happy ending because even if they break up, it leads to a new stage in each person's life.
- Happy ending, If each person is happy with the path that they chose, then I think that is a happy ending.
- 2 - Unhappy ending, because they are not together [married].
- It depends on how we define a happy end. Suppose that a happy end means that couples make a reasonable decision about their future. Then type 2 stories conclusion might be a happy end. But suppose we define a happy end as marriage, then type 2 stories are not happy end stories.
- Unhappy ending because they aren't happy.
- I think that a happy ending is possible even if they don't get married because their feelings are mutual.
- I can't say either way. As long as the couple is content, it is a happy ending.
- It isn't necessary to get married to be happy. I can't ultimately say that it is a happy ending, but there are times when an unhappy ending is a happy ending.
- It depends on the situation. Marriage isn't the only happiness. As long as the main couple happy, it is a happy ending.
- It depends. There are times when the separation is happy. As long as the people are happy, whether they break up or not, it is a happy ending.
- If breaking up means that the couple will have happier times, then I think that is a happy ending.
- I don't know, but if their feelings differ and they don't get married, then it isn't happy?
- Happy ending, because if the main characters are satisfied and don't get married, then that is their happiness.
- If each person is satisfied, I think it is a happy ending.
- Marriage doesn't necessarily equal a happy ending
- Unhappy ending

Male:

- If it was a good experience, I think that it is a happy ending.
- Happy ending, whether they marry or not, they are together
- 3 – Unhappy ending because the main characters don't get together.
- 2 – Unhappy ending
- I can't say because I may think that it was better that they didn't marry.
- No response
- Of course it isn't a happy ending but personally I enjoy them.
- No comment. The answer depends on the way the conclusion was reached.

- It differs depending on the reason why they didn't marry. If they both agree to look for new happiness, I think it is a happy ending. However, if they break up on a bad note, it is not a happy ending.
- There are times when I think it is happy and times when I don't.

Unknown:

- Yes

14. Can you think of any examples in Japanese literature, contemporary or classical, that these two types of stories remind you of?
Please list and explain why.

Type 1[Happy End]

Female:

- 7 - No response
- 8 - Don't know
- *Shyun kin shou*
- No, I don't read very much.

Male:

- 9 - No Response
- *Genji monogatari [The Tale of Genji]*
- Sorry, I don't read novels
- *Taketori monogatari [The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter]*
- Don't know

Unknown:

- No Response

Type 2 [Unhappy End]:

Female:

- *Kaguya hime/Taketori monogatari[The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter]*
- 7 - I don't know
- *Kokoro* by Natsume Souseki, *Noruuwei no mori[Norwegian Woods]* by Murakami Haruki (modern)
- 5 - No response
- *Maihime, Nogiku no haka* (modern)
- I don't know. I don't read much.
- *Genji monogatari [The Tale of Genji]*

Male:

- 8 - No response
- Sorry, I don't read novels
- 2 - *Genji monogatari [The Tale of Genji]*
- *Hiteki no yoro no meki* by Mishima Yukio (modern)
- Don't know

Unknown:

- No response

For Sections 3 –6 answer only for dramas you have watched.

Section 3: ***Tokyo Love Story***

15. Kanji and Rika do not marry each other at the end of the drama. How do you think they feel about this?

Female:

- 2 - They both realized that it was just one part of their lives. Since they were both starting new lives, they thought that it was ok.

- Their lives were taking different paths, so they had no choice, but they are still in each other's hearts
- Sorry, I forgot most of this story. I don't remember the last part in particular
- Kanji felt badly for Rika. Rika thought that it was ok as long as Kanji was going to be happy.
- I think that they were both convinced that it was fate.
- At first I think that they were both sad, but then they both felt that it was for the best.
- I think that they both came to understand whether or not they could be happy forever together. It wasn't a sudden break up, they realized that they were gradually growing apart.
- 2 – no response
- Rika: I think that she was shocked, but then she tried her best to move on. Kanji: that is just the way it is
- This conclusion will have a positive influence on their future plans
- Both Rika and Kanji made a clear break with each other
- I suppose they thought that it was a good experience (good love)
- 2 - They both came to a mutual understanding.
- They thought it was ok. It was fate.

Male:

- They broke up
- I think that Kanji felt badly for Rika. I suppose that Rika was really sad. However, I think that she still loved Kanji so she couldn't hate him
- I think that they really had wanted to marry each other.
- 2 – no response
- Their feelings weren't exactly the same, but they knew that if their feelings became any deeper that they would hurt each other I suppose.
- They liked each other, but it was not the type of love that you married for.
- I think that Kanji felt guilty about Rika but he was happy with Satomi. Rika felt betrayed by Kanji and tried to find someone better.
- I think that they both had the prospect of new love and also a new life.
- They both judged that even if they stayed together they would never become happy.

Unknown:

- At that time Kanji liked another woman so he could only see Rika as a friend, but when Rika disappeared, the woman Kanji was looking (wanted) for was her.

16. Rika always expresses the way she feels to everyone. How do you feel about this quality?

Female:

- I think that it is a very attractive personality. I admire people who are always honest and don't conceal things.
- I like it. There are so many things that cannot be expressed unless you put them into words. I wish that I could express myself like Rika does.
- If she were in my group of friends, it would be difficult, but I like her honesty.
- I think she is a little bit selfish. She is like 'going my way' type of person. I guess sometimes revealing our own mind is a good thing (i.e. no stress left). But sometimes such a open-minded (too open-minded) characteristics might make somebody else trouble.
- I think it is good that she is frank.
- 2 - I like her personality.
- I have the same kind of personality as Rika so I like her way of thinking.
- She seemed to be very optimistic, cheerful and innocent. In fact, I think that she was a very sensitive girl. She was a kind girl who could express her feelings, and pretend not to see or hear anything.
- 2 – no response
- Personally I think that it is good. I like that she doesn't have another side to her personality.
- I think she is selfish.
- I envy her. I would like to be like her.

- Realistically, it would be very difficult [to be like Rika], but I think she has a good personality. I envy her.
- I think that at times it is suitable and at times it is not.
- I think it is good because she knows what she wants.

Male:

- 3 - I like it.
- no response
- I don't think it is very good to spread (open up to) a lot of people.
- I think that she is lonely and can't express her true feelings.
- There are times when she hurts others and there are times when she hurts herself, too.
- Positive, self-centered
- I think that she is a very independent woman, she is original.
- She has a very frank personality but I think that she should have more consideration for the people around her.
- I think that it is rare among Japanese people. Maybe if they lived in a foreign country for a while?

Unknown:

- She is a man's ideal woman

17. Why is this drama called *Tokyo Love Story*?

Female:

- Because they wanted it to the biggest love story of the modern era and it took place in Tokyo.
- 3 - Because it is a love story that takes place in Tokyo. Things like that happen everyday in Tokyo.
- Because they met in Tokyo and that is where everything occurred.
- I remember this drama brought a new taste to ordinary love stories. This story was more like an 'urban style' version of love stories. 'Tokyo' sounds like 'urban city, busy, active'. Therefore, the title was set to provide audiences an impression of 'a hard, busy, active love story' between Rika and Kanji.
- I thought that it was because in a metropolis 'love dramas' often occur…(maybe…)
- Don't know
- Because it is just one of many love stories that occur everyday in a metropolis full of young people called Tokyo.
- 2 – no response
- Rika's dry personality is typical of a metropolis. Tokyo is 'the' metropolis of Japan.
- 2 - Because it is a story that takes place in Tokyo.
- Because it is a story about what happened to Kanji after he moved to Tokyo.
- It might mean that it is a dry [cold?] love story that takes place in Tokyo where there are a lot of people
- It is a love story about young people who have come from other places.

Male:

- Don't know why.
- I think that it is small town Kanji encounters big city Tokyo represented by Rika, falls in love and grows up.
- 2 - Because it is a love story that takes place in Tokyo.
- 2 - It is a love story that is possible in Tokyo
- 4 – no response
- Because it is a love story between a person from Tokyo and a person from another area that takes place amidst the congestion of Tokyo.
- Because Kanji is from another place and the love story takes place in Tokyo.
- It is a love story in which people with typical Tokyo personalities get together that happens in a place like Tokyo where there are a lot of different people

Unknown:

- Tokyo = cool, cold, loneliness

Section 4: *Long Vacation*

18. In *Long Vacation* Minami gives up the chance to marry a successful photographer to be with Sena, a younger man whose future is uncertain. What do you think of this ending? Explain why.

Female:

- I think it is great. If your future is uncertain then you are free to have many dreams. However, in reality, women wouldn't really be able to choose such a guy, so I think it is great!
- I think it is good because it is possible in the dramatic world. I might not be so good in reality
- It is the only way for it to end. You can't marry someone you don't like!
- I think that this ending is a good one. Because no matter how hard the life gonna be, it must be important to get married with people who we really love! (Who cares one's social standing)
- I think it is good because the one Minami liked was Sena.
- Even though it was a painful thing to do, it was honest. I think that it was very pure. She wasn't thinking of marriage as a goal.
- I like it. It isn't a matter of money or honour. I think that if you love each other then, you can overcome all obstacles.
- 2 – no response
- I think that it was a happy ending because she could marry the person that she wanted to marry.
- Good Choice! If it isn't a person that you really like, then you can't get married.
- I think it is very romantic. Marriage is different than true love, and does not only involve affection, but economics, too. However, Minami went with her true feelings instead of money.
- I think that it was a good ending. If you don't marry the person that you really love, then you will always wonder about that person.
- It is a typical drama plot line. If it is this way, it will be successful.
- Isn't this question wrong? Minami didn't really refuse to marry the cameraman because she wanted to marry Sena, she simply wanted to marry someone she really liked. Minami's character wasn't so complex.
- I think it is good, isn't it? Now it is good to go with someone whom you like best.
- I think that it is good because I think that she really loves Sena.

Male:

- I think it is good. Personally, the photographer bothered me.
- 6 – no response
- I don't think that Minami gave up marrying the photographer in order to marry Sena. I think that she did that because she cared for Sena. I think that it was good because Minami was true to her own feelings.
- I like it. Even if you with someone with someone with money and status, you can't be happy.
- Minami didn't refuse to marry the cameraman to marry Sena, she liked Sena so she married him.
- Minami is almost borderline, but Sena is still a young man with a bright future ahead. If it is what they like, I suppose it is good.
- I think that it was a good ending. No particular reason but it wasn't a bad ending.
- It is not realistic, but possible on television

Unknown:

- Who knows what will happen in love?

19. At the end of the drama, Minami and Sena get married to each other. Do you think that they will live 'happily ever after'?

Female:

- I don't know, but I would like them to be happy.
- I think that they are a couple who argue often and will be happy.
- I think so. It would be frustrating if I didn't think so.

- I guess so. Because after many hardships (living apart, arguments, etc.) they finally found that both are good partners for their future.
- Yes, because they love each other very much.
- I think that there will be times when they have regrets and times when they will be disappointed but (personality wise) I think that they can overcome anything together.
- I think so because it is a given that they always think of each other.
- 3 - no response
- I think so because no matter what happens they seem like a couple that will get along well together.
- 2 - Yes, I think that they will become happy because they have very similar characters so they get along well with each other.
- Yes, they often have little disagreements, but they will always be a close couple.
- If Sena is more optimistic then Minami will probably follow suit
- I think so because they are considerate of each other.
- I think so because even though she had a successful fiancé, she ended up with Sena.

Male:

- Probably, because the show ended on a good note.
- 4 – no response
- Somehow I think so.
- I think so
- Yes, because they care about each other
- I hope so
- Yes because their bond is strong because they overcame many obstacles before they got married.
- Yes, the reason that they are unable break up is that Sena has the happiness to carry out his dreams and Minami is on the verge of that so they will grow old and content together.
- I think that they will live happily ever after because it is evident that Minami loves Sena for spiritual, not material reasons. Provided that Sena feelings are the same.
- Japanese dramas are made with happiness after marriage, unhappiness never happens.

Unknown:

- I think that they will meet with many challenges but they will overcome them.

20. **Why do you think the drama is called *Long Vacation?***

Female:

- We don't know what the future holds for us but even though many things may happen, happiness lasts forever.
- 2 - Because it took a lot of time for the two of them to come together
- I don't know.
- Here 'vacation' may imply something like 'a long process to achieving happiness'. During this 'vacation' both person experienced different things (hardships, relationships with somebody else, etc.)' and, finally, after such a 'long vacation' they found what they are supposed to be.
- I don't know. I think maybe because it was a long vacation in between the time Sena and Minami met and they got married.
- Because before they met one another, their lives were just a long vacation. After that their life together began.
- Because they hope that their future together will be calm and relaxing.
- 3 – no response
- It conveys the idea that people have to take time out of everyday life to relax.
- After a person has been emotionally hurt, before they try to change and grow as a person, there are times when it is necessary to give your heart and body relaxation time. We call this a heart/soul rest.
- It is called *Long Vacation* because Minami explained that when she was stood up at the altar, lost her job and nothing good was happening it was a vacation that the gods gave her. So in the drama, at the end of the 'vacation' she married Sena.
- During on of Minami and Sena's conversations the term 'long vacation' came up! (yo!)

- While they spent a short time relaxing and enjoying themselves, they found love.
- After a long time, the two came together

Male:

- Because that is what Sena said to Minami when she lost her job.
- 8 – no response
- Because their feelings were always complicated and mixed up for a long time?
- Because it expresses the recharging time before you do something big.
- This drama was a preparation period for people to be people and become happy and was a turning point in the lives of Sena and Minami.
- Sena said "Life isn't all bad, and it isn't all good. If bad things continue for a long time, it is ok not to try so hard and to take a break."

Unknown:

- Long Vacation = the couple's eternal love

Section 5: *The Most Important Person*

21. **In the drama *Most Important Person*, the main character, Kôhei, tells Miwa that ever since he married Hiroko, he has come to realize that Miwa is the most important person in his life and that he and Miwa would be together forever.**
How does his statement make you feel? What does it make you think? Discuss this statement.

Female:

- 15 – no response
- How can they be together forever even though they didn't get married? I thought that it was something that was easy for him to say that at the time.
- It is unfortunate for Hiroko because Kôhei is married to her and says these things to another woman.

Male:

- 11 – no response
- I haven't seen this drama but I'd like to comment on it.
I thought "What [the hell] are you saying?".
I think that he is just being selfish because he is married to someone else.
- I think that it is very romantic. I relate to it. He looked happy at the wedding reception. It showed that only by giving up marrying another woman that it then becomes possible to make one woman happy.

22. **How do you think Miwa feels about the above statement?**

Female:

- 15 – no response
- I think that it was a very complex feeling because even though they liked each other, they couldn't get married. But I think that she was delighted to be the most important person in Kôhei's life.
- I think that Miwa felt the same about Kôhei.

Male:

- 11 – no response
- I haven't seen this drama but I'd like to comment on it. I think that it hurt her.
- I think that she is relieved that she was able to renew her childhood friendship.

23. **Why doesn't Kôhei marry Miwa?**

Female:

- 15 – no response
- Because he didn't see her as a woman. He didn't want to protect her.
- I don't know

Male:

- 12 – no response
- The reason is Hiroko. He felt the warmth of her kindness and determination and realized that it was more important to make Hiroko happy.

24. Throughout the drama Kôhei and Miwa seem to be longing for one another, but never admitting it to anyone. Is this type of longing romantic? Why or why not?

Female:
- 15 – no response
- I don't think so because it is painful for each person.
- I don't think so. I don't understand how one can't accept the other even if they have longed for each other.

Male:
- 12 – no response
- Yes, but it doesn't pay.

Section 6: ***Love Generation***

25. **The slogan that runs throughout *Love Generation* is 'True Love Never Runs Smooth'. What do you think this slogan means?**

Female:
- True love will last forever
- 10 – no response
- I don't understand the English
- Genuine love doesn't go smoothly
- True love is never a simple thing
- True love can be found by overcoming obstacles.
- It means even if you like each other, there are still a lot of ups and downs.
- Don't know

Male:
- 9 – No response
- True love is never simple
- There are many trials in love.
- Hardship! Love is more difficult than climbing *chomoranma* mountain and more mysterious than the Mariana Trench.
- In obtaining true love, you must overcome many obstacles.
- Various things happen. When you overcome those things you reach love.

Unknown:
- No response

26. **Teppei and Riko get married to each other at the end of *Love Generation*. Do you think that they will live 'happily ever after'?**

Female:
- 7 - Yes
- 10 – (22b, 24d, 24g, 25h, 26j, 26k, 27L, 29m, 29o)
- I don't think so because Teppei's feelings seem to be fickle.

Male:
- 8 – no response
- 5 - yes

Unknown:
- no response

27. Why do you think this drama is called *Love Generation*?

Female:

- Maybe because a lot of love is given
- 10 – no response
- Because it is a delicate time.
- It' s true love. It is a refreshing love story.
- Because the main characters are right at the 'age to fall in love'
- Because people the same age as Teppei and Riko start looking for real love at that time.
- Because it was the age for them to fall in love.
- Don't know

Male:

- 9 – no response
- Because it portrays young love.
- I think that rather than *Love Generation, Love Generator* is better (*hanamaru)*
- Because it is a drama depicting emotionally confused young people taking action in order to obtain true love.
- Maybe because it is rare for the young generation of today to focus on nonmaterial love in their lives.

Everyone should answer Section 7

Section 7:

28. **Below is a list of terms** [the number in brackets is the total number of times word was chosen]:

- **[2] *mono no aware:* classical Japanese literary term**
- **[13] *tsurai*: painful, hard**
- **[17] *koishisa*(classical Japanese literary term)**
- **[20] *itôshisa*: longing, yearning**
- **[14] *renai:* true love**
- **[2] *omiai*: arranged marriage**
- **[20] *setsunai*: bittersweet**
- **[14] *shiawase*: happiness**
- **[13] *raburabu*: love, love (a cute term for young love)**
- **[11] *hakanai*: fleeting (classical Japanese literary term)**
- **[7] *eikyû*: eternity, eternally**

Which of the above terms closely describes the love story in the following dramas? Why?

Tokyo Love Story:

Female:

- *Renai, mono no aware, tsurai*
- *Mono no aware:* because Rika and Kanji couldn't get together
- *Hakanai*: because they didn't get together.
- *Setsunai, koishisa, itôshisa*
- *Koishisa, itôshisa*: even though they like each other, it is hard to be together
- *Renai, tsurai, setsunai*: I think it is absolutely the best love story
- *Setsunai*: because watching it somehow I felt sad
- *Setsunai*: although their feelings became mutual, just as their initial encounter was sudden, so was their parting because when things were going well, the suddenness was unimaginable. I think that when things were going well, they couldn't predict that things would not go smoothly. It is in that that I feel it was bittersweet (*setsunasa*).
- 2 – no response
- *setsunai, renai, tsurai*: I don't suppose there is anything more painful than watching the person you love marry someone else.
- I don't remember enough about the drama to answer
- *Setsunai*: even though Rika really liked Kanji, she couldn't convey her feelings.
- *tsurai*: even now I can't forget the look on Rika's face when she was crying in the train.
- *setsunai*: because they didn't end up together after all.

- *Renai, hakanai*
- *Renai*

Male:

- 3 – no response
- *itôshisa, renai*
- *Tsurai, setsunai, hakanai*
- *Tsurai, hakanai, renai*
- *Tsurai, setsunai, renai, koishisa, itôshisa*
- *Setsunai, shiawase, hakanai*
- *Tsurai, koishisa, itôshisa, setsunasa, hakanasa*: Rika could not convey her feelings for Kanji
- *Tsurai, hakanai, setsunai*: When it is a break up story, it is also tragic love story
- *Renai*: because people with different personalities have various love relationships in order to find the right person for them.
- *Renai*
- *Tsurai*

Unknown:

- *Koishisa, itôshisa, setsunai*

***Long Vacation*:**

Female:

- *raburabu, shiawasei*
- *Raburabu*: because the couple's hearts are connected
- *Raburabu*: the phrase speaks for itself
- *Koishisa, itôshisa, shiawase*: because both two were thinking about each other at anytime (I think). But they can't express their mind easily (this is *koishisa, itooshisa*). And they finally got together.
- *Shiawase*: because in the end the realized that they liked each other and were able to marry
- *Koishisa, itôshisa, shiawase*: longing and yearning were expressed well in this drama
- *eikyû*: long vacation = eternity
- 2 – no response
- *Eikyuu*: It was a drama in which the couple came to accept one another as eternal partners
- *Shiawase, koishisa, itooshisa*: Ultimately, they found the person that they got along with the best and liked the best so I think it is '*shiawase*'.
- *Setsunai*: Even though Minami and Sena liked each other, they couldn't be honest about their feelings for a long time.
- *Koishisa, itôshisa*: because at first they argued all the time and then little by little they became more romantically conscious of each other
- *Raburabu*: because it reminded me of young people today and the content of the story is shallow so *raburabu* is good enough to explain it.
- *Koishisa*: Sena and Minami are different ages, have completely different personalities and different interests, but they are good together only because they love and need each other
- *Tsurai, setsunai, eikyû*: I want them to see their love through to eternity because they overcame so many obstacles together
- *Shiawase*

Male:

- *Koishisa, itôshisa*: because they were always just missing each other.
- 5 – no response
- *koishisa, itôshisa*
- *shiawase, omiai*
- *Raburabu*
- *Tsurai, koishisa, itôshisa, setsunasa, hakanasa*: Sena's bittersweet feelings towards Ryouko. *Shiawase, renai*: Sena and Minami's relationship
- *Koishisa, itôshisa, eikyuu*: It is a childish but eternal love.

- *Koishisa, itôshisa*: there are other words that can be included but the scenes that emphasized longing and yearning really stood out. (For example: Sena's piano playing)
- *Shiawase*
- Unknown:
- *Raburabu, eikyuu, shiawase*

The Most Important Person:

Female:

- *omiai, hakanai, setsunai*
- 13 – no response
- *Setsunai, tsurai*: even though they liked each other, they were never able to get together
- 2 - *Koishisa, itôshisa*
-

Male:

- 12 – no response
- *Setsunai*

Unknown:

- *Hakanai*

***Love Generation*:**

Female:

- *Eikyû, itôshisa, koishisa*
- 9 – no response
- *Itôshisa*: Even though it was ***raburabu***, it was bittersweet and painful. But, it was happy later.
- *Raburabu*: Riko's eagerness (wholeheartedness) is really cute.
- *Raburabu*: I think that when people today say '***raburabu***' they are expressing this kind of state.
- *Renai*: because it is a drama about people who are confirming whether or not what they have found is love.
- *Raburabu:* because a young couple has the air of ***raburabu***.
- *Raburabu*: they are young, the word ***raburabu*** is perfect.
- *Raburabu*

Male:

- 7 – no response
- *Koishisa, itôshisa, raburabu*
- *Renai*
- *Koishisa, itôshisa, raburabu, shiawase, setsunasa, renai*: the main couple were unsure of their feelings
- *Hakanai, shiawase*: I'd like to think that a love that endures many hardships is stronger.
- *Shiawase*: because they overcame various obstacles and finally were able to find mutual happiness
- *Eikyû*

Unknown:

- *Renai*